Entertainment
Albert: I have to be strong for William
Across/A18
No power crisis despite brownouts, Mindanaoans told
Sports
Pistons down Pacers, square series
World/A12
Bush vows continued US stay in Iraq
Metro/A22
Manila catch basin of Metro trash
Balik Tanaw/A22
8 intriga sa politika

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, May 26, 2004 • 36 pages / vol. 19 / no. 168
website: www.inq7.net

Zubiri: 2 versions of agri funds for 'ghost' fertilizer

By Armand N. Nocum

PNP links Gringo to plot but he denies involvement

By Christian V. Esguerra and Michael L. Ubac

Debates delay Congress count

Joint session to start canvass tomorrow

By Cynthia D. Balana and Carlos Pelayo

CONTENTIOUSNESS yesterday continued to rule in Congress as arguments over whether the joint session could allow a 14-member committee to canvass the votes for president and vice president in lieu of the plenary again delayed the official canvass.

As separately announced by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday afternoon after a caucus, the lawmakers were to vote on the canvass rules at 9 p.m. tonight, paving the way for the formal start of the canvass at 10 a.m. on Thursday.

Dr. Venecia and Drilon said there was an agreement on a free-for-all joint House and Senate debate on the proposed rules, particularly on the formation of the committee that would conduct the canvass.

But at the resumption of the joint session at 6 last night, Drilon and De Venecia announced a "conceptual breakthrough"—a "mixed debate" in which senators and congressmen were to interpellate each other.

The camp of Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr. insists that the entire Congress—composed of 225 congressmen and 22 senators—act as the National Board of Canvassers.

Hearing that leaders of Poe's camp were present at the caucus, Dr. Venecia and the opposition should no longer quarrel on the legality of the formation of the 14-member committee.

"After this, they may not go to the Supreme Court anymore because the entire body, acting of the opposition, was [at the caucus]," he said.

But in a phone interview, Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo (LDP, Aurora) said: "We are not giving up the option of running

CANVASS CONVOY: Marines escorted by motorcycle cops transfer the certificates of canvass from the Senate to the House of Representatives on Tuesday for Congress to validate the results of the May 10 election for the two highest positions in the land. Only Congress is mandated by the Constitution to canvass the votes and proclaim the winners. ALEX BAJASAN

ENJOY PEJACA is "knocking on the door" of Comelec officials to be fair and observe the rule of law.

Palace powerhouse team goes to Batasan

By Carlos Pelayo

A POWERHOUSE team from Malacañang has set up operations at the House of Representatives, site of Congress' official canvass of the results of the presidential elections.

Its assignment—Comelec daily media briefings—rise to the early afternoon and possibly too much later in the day—and assist Senate Malakanyat legal counsel of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We're here to help in information dissemination," Michael Defensor, Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson, said, explaining the real shoot a vacation in the United States to do some trouble-shooting.

Also in the team composed of Ms Macapagal's most trusted aides are Hermie Sinquinco, major-domo of Malacanang, Pangasinan;

Winning Isabela bet brings fight to Metro

By Michael Lim Ubac

Biazon hangs on 'by his fingernails' to 12th spot

By Martin P. Nadal, Wil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

Abalos: Notes, yes; leak, no

By Martin P. Nadal

DISENFRANCHISEMENT

Group to probe why many could not vote

By Blanche S. Rivera

SUBMERGED BUILDING
For eight hours, a fire raged as a three-storey shopping center on Cortada Street, Quiapo. Except for a slightly injured fireman, business went on as usual. (See story on Page A11)

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Gov't to step up antiterror drive

By Sir C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT will step up its counter-terrorism offensive following the release of four hostages—one Filipino and three Indonesians—from eight months of captivity in the southern Philippines the other day.

"We are gladdened by reports that the hostages are free. This opens the way for a stronger operational offensive to bring their abductors to justice," said presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

The hostages were part of a group of six workers of the Sonzale Resort in Palawan province who were kidnapped on Oct. 5 last year and taken by speedboat to the southern Philippines.

One of the hostages, identified only as Jeanne, reportedly died in captivity while another, a Filipino identified as Marvelyn Mosot, was able to escape three weeks after their abduction.

Bunye told the Philippine military the kidnappers belonged to the Abu Sayyaf, although this was never confirmed.

The Abu Sayyaf had launched similar hostage raids on Malaysian and Philippine resorts in 2000 and 2001, kidnapping foreign and local tourists for ransom. Several of the tourists, including Americans, were killed.

Bunye said the government's aim is to flush out the Abu Sayyaf and cut its ties to the Jemaah Islamiya, a Southeast Asian regional terror group blamed for the 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, that killed 202 people.

"These two terror groups have had a terrorism partnership bonded by common funds and resources," said Bunye, apparently alluding to intelligence reports that the two groups had joined forces to form an antiterror squad, the Urban Death Squad (sic) in Sulu.

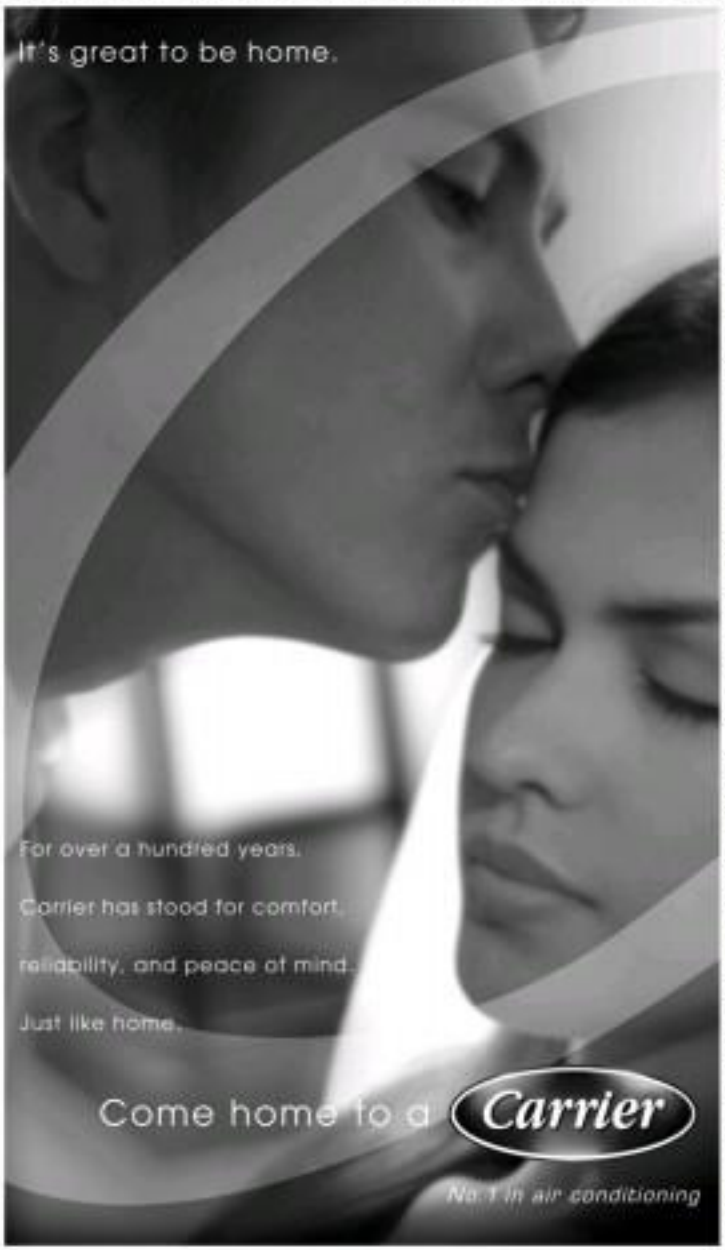
Bunye expressed confidence the Abu Sayyaf and JI have been crippled with the recent arrest of their key leaders and the discovery of their bedding contacts.

The released hostages were returned by base to Malaysia's eastern island state on Borneo island on Monday, after a ransom of up to US$2,000 (P110 million) was reportedly paid, Sabah police commissioner Ilyas Ibrahim said. He did not say who was base paid the kidnappers, and their story conflicting reports about their abductors.

Bunye denied they were members of the al Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group, while Malaysian officials said they were priests who had reportedly sought a multimillion dollar ransom for the workers.

The hostages were identified in Zurich Survivor of the Philippines and Indonesian Amir Abdul Jaya and Sawita.

The kidnapping spree prompted the United States to send troops and instructors to help Philippine soldiers discharge the rebels operating there two years ago. The military operations and the arrest spree of senior guerrilla commanders had led the government to declare the group a spent force. With AP report



Warning out on possible NPA attacks

By Nicole Pigo

WITH THE Armed Forces of the Philippines focused on ensuring the counting of the certificates of canvass by Congress, the New People's Army might stage attacks to the countryside, warned AFP Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero.

"We have monitored that the NPA will be taking advantage of this crisis. We have alerted our field units to be extra vigilant and to preempt any move of the NPA to create havoc in the countryside," Lucero said in a press briefing yesterday.

"They would like to make their presence felt by conducting simultaneous attacks in the countryside, particularly against AFP and PNP troops," he said, adding that the NPA did not have the capability to launch terrorist attacks in Metro Manila.

The NPA has expressed its opposition to the electoral process. "We haven't heard anything good from them about the government. They would use any issue to smear the image of the government. You can't expect any good from them," Lucero said.

There were also reports that the NPA had ordered into a tactical alliance with forces in the opposition to destabilize the government but this was quickly denied by CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal.

The Bicol influenced NPA has been fighting a 33-year war in the countryside. It is the longest running insurgency in Asia.

Talks between the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the National Democratic Front, the umbrella organization and legal front of the Communist Party of the Philippines, have been put on hold until after the May 20 elections.

Davao airport, wharf bombings suspect nabbed

DAVAO CITY—A Muslim militant tagged as a key suspect in last year's deadly bombings of the airport and a wharf here that killed 16 people has been arrested, police said yesterday.

Abdul Casinto, 39, was captured Sunday near a port in the city, according to police senior Supt. Ansarino Pindi.

Covering that he had a hand in the March 2001 attack on the Davao International Airport and the bombing of the Sasa wharf a month later, Casinto claimed that he was only forced by police to admit involvement. He admitted however that he was a leader of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) commanding a rebel unit of 50 fighters based in Tod'l town.

"I simply got scared, that's why I was prompted to admit the bombing," Casinto told reporters on cellular phone from his detention cell.

Intelligence reports said Casinto was a key suspect in the bombings, Pindi said, adding that the government had earlier placed a P500,000 bounty on his head.

The MILF, the country's main Muslim insurgent force which has waged a separatist rebellion in Mindanao since 1978, is currently negotiating peace with the government.

It had denied earlier allegations by the military that it was involved in terrorist bombings and had links to the Jemaah Islamiya (JI) regional terror network.

JI is believed to be the Southeast Asian arm of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida international terror network and has been linked to the hostage-taken Abu Sayyaf terror group. It was blamed for the October 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia that left over 202 persons dead. AFP

Gov't to sue supplier of computers that were never used in polls

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE GOVERNMENT will be filing a civil case against the Mega Pacific Solutions Consortium for the recovery of the P1.06 billion that the Commission on Elections paid for the automated counting machines (ACMs) intended for the May elections, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo said yesterday.

Benipayo said the complaint against Mega Pacific was "ready" and he was just waiting for additional evidence from the Comelec before the Office of the Solicitor General files the case in court.

"I'm still waiting for some evidence and documents from the Comelec. They're still busy with the canvassing [of votes]," Benipayo said.

Recovery ordered

Citing irregularities, the Supreme Court in January ordered the Comelec's ACM contract with Mega Pacific and ordered the OSG to recover the P1.03 billion paid to the consortium.

The SC also ordered the Office of the Solicitor General to determine whether a criminal case could be filed against the public officials and private individuals involved in the deal.

More compelling

"I think that if the criminal case would be more compelling," said Benipayo, explaining that the civil case aims to recover the money might take longer to resolve.

He said he has sent to the Ombudsman the evidence that the OSG has gathered related to the case.

He refused to say what additional evidence need still be coming from the Comelec.

Benipayo said he was confident of recovering the P1.03 billion even if Mega Pacific had already delivered the ACMs to the Comelec.

'Down the drain'

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier expressed the public think that the P1 billion that the Comelec had advanced to the consortium would not be "money down the drain."

"We will fight with all lawful means to recover it and protect the public interest," she said.

Unreasonable demand

Mega Pacific lawyer Alfredo Lazaro Jr. had claimed that the Feds did not owe the government anything since it delivered the counting machines. He said the demand for refund was unreasonable as the machines had been tested "under limited conditions" and the government was "not capable of ordering the machines to [final] stage tests."

"We are not at fault. We performed our end of the deal in good faith and delivered the machines based on Comelec specifications. Hence, we should not be made to suffer financially," said Lazaro.

Supreme Court ruling

In its January ruling voiding the deal, the Supreme Court said the Comelec "put at grave risk the holding of credible and peaceful elections by decidedly accepting electronic machines and software that admittedly failed to pass legally mandated technical requirements."

The court also told the Comelec "to refrain from implementing any other contract or agreement" relating to the Mega Pacific project.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board board member Yolie Rasalan (second from right) meet with leaders of transport groups Bus Pasay chairman Jerry Sotelo (second from left) and Quiapo-based Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines president Orlando Marcos (right) after the latter's group pledged support for the President's candidacy in the May 14 elections. Malacañang Photo Bureau

GMA treats bus, jeep operators

By GDC Calasanguin Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday hosted lunch for a hundred jeepney and bus operators, drivers and conductors at Malacañang where she thanked their organizations for what they say is support to planned fare increases or power rate hikes allegedly massive fraud in the May 14 elections.

In a briefing, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza said the President acknowledged the support that the bus and jeepney organizations gave her during the election campaign, particularly for placing #4 and "Vote-Gloria" paraphernalia on their vehicles.

He said the lunch was organized by the government to thank the bus and jeepney transport groups.

"They continue to support the President even after the elections by providing stability both politically and economically," Mendoza said.

Among the groups that joined the Malacañang luncheon were Pasang Masda, Piglabaj, MODA, Alyansa, PUJO sa QC, Bayanihan, ALTO, Bicolandia, Isidro and UPTOP.

Mendoza also noted the transport groups' statement on the fare hike issue by not pursuing it before the elections. He said it would have been difficult for the government to ease transport fares before the elections because of political, security and economic reasons.

He stressed that the grant of the increase—P1.50 in the minimum fare and P1 for every additional kilometer—should not be considered a reward for the bus and jeepney representatives for the support they gave the President.

He said the fare hike, which is to take effect in the second week of June, had been long overdue considering that fares were last adjusted four years ago and the factors have increased by 56 percent since then.

The government has estimated that the fare hike would boost the daily income of jeepney and bus drivers and conductors by P100 to P150 and P200, but this would still be below the minimum wage.

Mendoza said jeepney and bus drivers avail in cash P500 to P700 a day to drive.

2 DAYS TO GO!

* 0% appliance installment showdown

INTEREST

Glorietta Activity Center

MAY 14 - 27, 2004

*ZERO INTEREST AT 3, 6, 9, 12, 18 AND 24 MONTHS ON GREAT SELECTIONS.

FREE DELIVERY ON SELECTED METRO MANILA AREAS!

SAMSUNG • JVC • PANASONIC • CASIOTONE • WHIRLPOOL
• PIONEER • CARRIER • CONDURA • KELVINATOR • SHARP
• FEDDERS • KOPPEL • GE • ARISTON • LA GERMANIA
• FISHER AND PAYKEL • PHILIPS • ELBA • KOLIN • TCL • 3D
• CHANGHONG • AMERICAN HOME • HAIER MIDEA • TOSHIBA
• PROMAC • HYUNDAI • INFINITE QUALITY DESIGN • UNI-AIR

citibank · BPI Express Credit · Standard Chartered · AIG Credit Cards · Equitable · Metrobank · HSBC · Bankard · Diners Club International

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.r 0849 Series of 2004

Anson EMPORIUM

WE BEAT ANYBODY'S PRICE!

VISIT OUR BRANCHES AT:

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.ansons.com.ph

MEN OF THE HOUR: Senate President Franklin Drilon and Speaker Jose de Venecia at the start of the joint session of Congress which is tasked to tabulate the 176 certificates of canvass. At press time, the contentious debate over the rules for canvassing continued.

Palace powerhouse...

(From page A1)

From Secretary Milton Alingasa, Barge Bermonde, media liaison chief of the administration E-1 coalition, and Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villaroya.

The low-key Alingasa was modest when asked what Mr Mangaoil's men were doing in the house.

"Like everybody else, we are also interested in how things will work out," Alingasa said.

Bermonde was outright in the point: "We're tasked to ensure that the side of the President is well-swallowed during the canvassing."

Villaroya, a longtime close associate of Mr Mangaoil's, simply said he would help in the information drive during the canvassing.

Mangaoil, a former press secretary and presidential adviser on political affairs, was spotted along with his crew at the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City on Monday afternoon.

Defensor, a former congressman and currently co-leader of the Lihosang and urban Development Coordinating Council, used to head the Mamamayang pwot corps on an almost daily basis during the campaign.

Now he will do the thing in the House.

Asked to comment on the duties of the Kusgan ng Maghahalang Pilipino that its mastland Senate Pro Jr. had won the election, Defensor said: "They don't do anything because the CoCs [certificates of canvass] for senators are the same ones that were brought here."

He was referring to the CoCs canvassed by the Commission on Elections for the senatorial race.

On Monday, a Comelec official leaked an unofficial computation on the results of the presidential race based on the poll body's copies of the CoCs which purportedly showed that Mr Macapagal beat Poe by some 900,000 votes. (See cartoon story on Page A2)

Zubiris: 2 versions ...

(From page A1)

for the purchase of fertilizer and other "farm inputs."

His father, Bohinhon Rep. Jose Ma. R. Zubiri Jr., however, denied getting a single centavo from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for the same purpose.

List of recipients

The names of the father and son were on the list of 105 congressmen, 32 governors and 33 mayors who allegedly received P1 million to P5 million each from the government's "Guimanong Mangunang Aid" program.

The list was among the evidence that former Solicitor General Frank Chavez presented to the Office of the Ombudsman when he filed plunder and graft charges against Mr Macapagal and three DBM officials.

Chavez claimed Mr Macapagal used the money, which was released seven days before the start of the campaign period, to bankroll her campaign as well as that of her political allies.

He accused the President of engaging in a "systematic plunder of the nation's coffers."

Chavez dared the President to "waive" her immunity from suit to show that she had nothing to hide. "I am challenging her to waive her immunity because immunity is waivable," he said.

He expressed confidence that he had the "smoking gun" against the President this time because he had copies of the checks and copies of the cash allocations, disbursements and notices of cash allotment to the DA and the Land Bank of the Philippines, all bearing the necessary bar codes.

The governors included Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, Pedro Bonoaldo of Camiguin, Faustino Dy Jr. of Isabela, Emmanuel F. Pelaez of North Cotabato and Tomas Jones III of Nueva Ecija. The local executives included Alicia, Isabela Mayor Napoleon E. Dy and Aurora, Isabela Mayor William T. Dy.

Abad denied receiving any funds.

"For the record, my office never received, much less at least, any funds coming from the agricultural funds intended for fertilizer and farm inputs released purportedly during the election campaign period," Abad said in a statement.

In the House of Representatives, two Luban congressmen—Rosgild Javier of Antipas and Roberto Uy of Isabela—dismissed the plunder suit that Chavez had filed against the President as another harassment case meant to derail her proclamation as the winner in the presidential election.

The denial of Governor Zubiri, who is in the United States for the "cancer operation" on his wife Ma. Victoria, appeared to have bolstered the accusations made by Chavez in his 16-page complaint.

"Child not receive centavo, neither anyone else from the agriculture department. Only Miguel, through his congressional district, received it, but he did not touch the money," said Zubiri, speaking from San Francisco.

Wastebasket

In a telephone interview with the Inquirer, the elder Zubiri said he wondered from "what wastebasket" Chavez got his supposed list.

"Honestly, I have not received a centavo that I have money there search P5 million. In fact, the provincial government did not receive even one centavo from anyone for that matter all these years," he said.

He said neither did the DBM use the central or regional agricultural office of the Department of Agriculture. Zubiri is "that I have some money there or else I will be unaccounted for a filed case against him," he said.

But he said the case of his son, Miguel, was "another story." The elder Zubiri said his son was given P5 million but he chose not to use it because he wanted the barangays to use it for a solar drier.

When told that he could only use it in purchase fertilizer, Miguel chose to leave the money untouched, according to Zubiri.

Intact: P5 million

The governor said DA Region 10 Director Ruth Glan in even issued a certification that Representative Zubiri's P5 million was "intact" and was still with the DA office.

He then turned the phone over to Miguel, who said he was informed about the release of the controversial funds about five months ago.

"I did not want to touch it because I knew that this was the subject of criticism from Don. Pacifico Lacson who was saying that the program was graft-prone, with lost of people asking for kickbacks and commissions," the congressman told the Inquirer.

"There was an allotment, but it's intact. I never touched it," he said. "My dad did not receive [it], but he came near there."

Told about Governor Zubiri's statements, Chavez laughed aloud. "Kinuya sila mahalata [I got it]! Now that you had been had it!"

He asked Zubiri to make good his plan to use him for libels "that all these may come out in public."

"But I suggest that the case be dealt on totals, with the President and Budget Secretary [Emilia] Boncodin as the respondents," he said.

Named co-respondent in the plunder case were Boncodin, Budget Undersecretary Iluminada Rodriguez and DBM Director Nora C. Olivares. With a report from Cynthia D. Balana

Abalos: Notes, yes; leak, no

From page A1

Abalos dismissed the furor generated by local and wire reports on the leak made on Monday by unnamed Comelec officials that President Macapagal-Arroyo had beaten Fernando Poe Jr. (Ang Kagitingang Pilipino standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr. based on the poll body's incomplete tally of the election results contained in the certificates of canvass.

There would be a real problem, he said, if a Comelec official had actually made such an announcement.

Speaking at a press briefing, Abalos said he was holding two sets of figures—one concerning the senatorial contest and the other his "own figures" on the presidential race.

"Eh kinalkula namin iba, nalito (Eh we computed [the figures] and saw my figures]. That was no announcement," he pointed out.

Abalos said he had been taking notes because "I want to know also subaga (who actually won)."

"But there was no public announcement," he said. "I do not know why people have to make a big issue out of this."

Under the Constitution, only Congress notices the votes for president and vice president.

Harriet Demetriou, a former Comelec chair and now a lawyer for Poe, told radio station dzRH that Abalos should face legal charges as head of the agency responsible for the dissemination of the Macapagal's supposed victory.

"It's very irresponsible," Demetriou said, adding that in her personal tally Poe had won.

The Associated Press had earlier quoted two top Comelec officials as saying that the unofficial votes showed a narrow win for Ms Macapagal. It said both officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

"It's clear, but Congress is the one who will proclaim that," AP quoted one of the officials as saying.

According to the Comelec officials, the votes showed Ms Macapagal with 39.5 percent of the vote, and Poe with 36.6 percent. They said the margin of her victory was more than 900,000 votes.

Two areas—Cotabato City and Sarangani province—remained to be counted, but they did not represent enough votes to affect the outcome, the officials said.

Ms Macapagal was leading Poe by more than 7-million votes in the unofficial quick count of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections. It had tallied more than 80 percent of 215,000 election precincts.

For Abalos, it was no leak.

"How can you say it's a leak? Our proceedings have been open to the public and transparent," he said, adding:

"Everybody can take notes. As a matter of fact, I have been taking notes. All of us are taking notes because it is our right as citizens [to know on our own who really won]."

He denied that any official of the Comelec had publicly announced Ms Macapagal's supposed victory: "I think no one of us made any public announcement."

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra declared that they were all lawyers at the Comelec and they were aware of the laws of the land.

"We know our Constitution and election laws," he said. "What we announced were the senatorial and party-list elections. We proclaimed 11 out of the 12 [winning senators] and, in the law, [we will proclaim] the party-list [winners]."

Borra also took a swipe at Mandivil and deplored its constant criticism of the Comelec.

He said that while Mandivil was supposed to conduct a quick count, developments showed that its count had reached only eight to nine million, while the Comelec's count was up to 19 million.

With an AP report

Fly the flag, Lina orders

LOCAL government executives have been ordered by Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose Lina Jr. to display the national flag in their homes, offices and other public places on May 28 to celebrate Iwalay Bandilang Filipino Day.

In a memorandum, Lina said all local executives from governors to barangay chairmen should lead by example in celebrating National Flag Day as part of the observance of the 106th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine Independence, which is celebrated on June 12.

Aside from displaying the flag, Lina said other activities could be undertaken by local executives. He said that rosters of flags should be replaced with new ones.

"Through these activities, we can show the world that Filipinos are truly proud of the national flag and the freedom we have won and continue to enjoy until now," Lina said. *Read it Flyer*

We Supply HARD-TO-FIND Foods
1. Prince Balls 6. Stuffed Shrimps
2. Asadi (Mr. Hotdog) 7. Quekiam Balls
3. Shashi Beef Cube 8. 5-in-1 Balls
4. Fun-Shaped 9. Beef Tocino/Longganisa
5. Chicken Nuggets 10. Tapa/Bun-ak Display Warmers
6. Chicken Balls 11. Fresh Fries
Ph. call MEDIA TSA-9888/714-9114

PABK INSTALLMENT
EASY & CONVENIENT DEAL
LEASE TO OWN PROMO

Imperial Royale Townhouses
Hyatt Manor on Wilson 39, 2004

OFFICE SUB.com

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY
YOUR JOB SECURITY
Speechpower offers you the most comprehensive program in English Proficiency
- AMERICAN ACCENT
- CONVERSATION FLUENCY
- GRAMMAR
- VOCABULARY
- BUSINESS WRITING
- PRESENTATION SKILLS
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
Be our guest on the first day of our TWO-WEEK INTENSIVE PROGRAM
Mon-Fri 2.5 hours per session
May 31 to June 11
SPEECHPOWER
The most sought-after by call centers.
Cubao Ayala Taft Eastwood
www.speechpower.com.ph

MATHEMATICS OF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT
LORAN INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE

SWEATSHOPPING SUMMER!
REC REVIEW CENTER
VERNON TAPALLA'S
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS and THE WRITING INSTITUTE
MAKATI - 843-0690 / 753-1849
ALABANG - 753-1048

DLI GENERICS
Quality as generic, as prevailing insa abot!
Suggested Retail Price January 8, 2004 - Makatipid ng higit sa 80%
Analgesic/Antipyretic
Anti-biotic
Anti-cough
Anti-diarrhea
Savings
WATSONS EMILENE'S PROJECT Cedro Solutions Rose Pharmacy

FREE STUDENT COUNSELING ON
MAY 28, 2004 - Fri (10:00 AM - 7:00 PM)
MAY 29, 2004 - Sat (8:00 AM - 7:00 PM)
MAY 30, 2004 - Sun (9:00 AM - 12:00 NN)
Tower Inn -Makati
NORTHWOOD UNIVERSITY

The best way to get a job in the USA is to get an AMERICAN DEGREE through the G.E.T. CIE - Northwood University, USA Program
2 years in CIE + 1 year in Northwood
CIE The School for Leaders
Northwood University Undergraduate Programs
Centre for International Education Global Colleges

John Robert Powers
SUMMER PROGRAMS
JUNE-JULY
JOHN ROBERT POWERS has a WORKSHOP FOR YOU.
PERSONAL STYLE, IMAGE DEVELOPMENT, SPEAKING, ACTING, MODELING
REGISTRATION IS LIMITED.
CALL TODAY 892-9511
Make it happen before your summer ends.
Workshops adapted for students on an intermittent schedule.
CASHIER BUILDING, 191 LAUREL STREET, ESCARPMENT PALACE, MAKATI CITY
CONVENIENT PARKING NEARBY
www.johnrobertpowers.com

METRO
Editor: Modesto S. Olandesca

SWERTRES 6 4 6
SIX DIGIT (May 23 draw) 6 5 9 3 5 6

6/42 Lotto 5 13 15 20 38 36
Mega Lotto 6 22 25 31 33 41

3 inmates killed in violence

By Margaux C. Cruz

FIVE the coalition of jail personnel three inmates from killing riot in a cell.

Two inmates were killed and four others injured when a murder convict ran amok inside the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City early yesterday morning.

Ronald Cueva and Cecilio Pedrosa were declared dead on arrival at the NBP Hospital shortly after 8:00 a.m. Assistant Timoteo Calora stabbed them with an ice pick.

Inmates Lupino Abalo, Gabriel Pedro L. Ildefonso Tuvera, Fernando Aglua and Alberto Manuwas also suffered injuries and were brought to the Philippine General Hospital for treatment.

Calora, a murder convict who also sustained injuries, was also taken to the PGH.

NBP initial reports showed that Calora went berserk and stabbed the victims with a pick-like ice pick and a 30-inch bolo knife at 5:00 a.m. in the maximum security compound's Building 4A-2, home to the hitting Lido 46 gang.

According to Bureau of Corrections Director Reynaldo Bangoy, the suspect's cellmates said Calora was "mentally deranged."

Findings explained that Calora's brother, Sergio, also was once a victim of harassment.

Sergio was killed after entering right cubicles of Building 1D-L, Santiago said.

The BuCor Director said the violence would be subjecting Calora to "a psychological analysis."

At the Makati City Jail, 33-year-old ex-theft suspect Teddy Reyes was shot dead inside the comfort room of one of the prison cells yesterday afternoon.

Reyes was found with a gunshot wound at the head and a swollen right eye, according to Jail Warden Edgar Rubio.

Initial investigation showed that Reyes sustained the gunshot at 3:30 p.m. while using a head count and got hold of the jail guard's 9-mm pistol.

Reyes then managed to put cadaver in the bathroom and attempted to escape.

Two to four gunshots were then heard throughout the jail shortly after Reyes entered the comfort room, Rubio said.

The jail warden said there was no shootout between the jail guards and Reyes.

Rubio said they believed Reyes committed suicide.

Correction

AN ITEM last Tuesday about the May 23, 2006, election in Manila's 3rd district misspelled the name of Rolando Bautista, who was declared the winner in the race for the 3rd district of Manila. He is actually called Rolando Z. Bautista.

In the same item, the name of Ernesto Maly was misspelled as Ernesto Mali. He is among the elected councilors in Quezon City's fourth district. The name should have been Ernesto Ballon Maliaya, who actually ranked Number 4.

We regret the errors.

Business as usual as store burns

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SIZE of buying and selling remained unaffected as a result of arson as business went on as usual along Carriedo Street in Quiapo, Manila, while one of the shopping centers in the area burned.

People looking for a bargain packed the streets in front and on both sides of the Carriedo Shopping Plaza, as farmers fought a blaze that was getting the three-story structure to complete.

When the blaze started at 7:30 a.m., firemen had to deal with the camera scene that was found with stalls selling goods from backpacks, bracelets, necklaces and footwear, plastic toy animals and umbrellas.

Carriedo Street has been reserved for pedestrians and vendors since last year as part of a city government project.

When the fire first started, firefighters had to break through the shopping center's windows as the second floor door it was still closed when the blaze started on the ground floor, according to fire investigator FO3 Arjo Magallanes.

As the fire progressed, firemen had to deal with the throngs of people looking for bargains and vendors that sell goods, some even engaged with those sold in nearby Divisoria.

During the day BFCO Director Lupo Gallenzi activated Task Calling debris inside the building.

The blaze that sparked the fifth alarm, was declared under control at 9:15 p.m.

Because of the fire, several establishments around the burning building had no electricity. But they opened for business for the day and even after the blaze was put out at 8:30.

In fact, were it not for the presence of firemen and firefighter along Carriedo Street, it would not have been obvious that a fire was taking place in one of the buildings.

On the side of the Carriedo Shopping Plaza, vendors with wooden, makeshift stalls were still looking out as fabrics catching the fire-fighting for blocking the way of potential customers.

Only the walls on the east side of Carriedo Street that were in front of the burning building were closed. The rest, which run along the whole length of Carriedo, remained open.

"Parang normal lang sa amin. Para ako nagtinda. (This for it is a situation. How could I go about with my shopping?)" one shopper remarked as he observed the firefighting.

48-year-old widow slain in Manila home

A MURDER preacher was found killed inside her home in Manila on Monday night with a single stab wound on her neck.

Police identified Gallenzi, a 48-year-old widow. She was found sprawled in the living room of her home in Manila 24, Quiapo, Manila, Tuesday.

Investigators by SPO1 Ronnie Caballero showed that Gallenzi's body was found at 8:45 p.m. by her neighbors, who had been wondering about her whereabouts.

Caballero said the victim had not been seen by her neighbors or close by for allegedly daughter and was taken since Monday at noon. Leila Salaverria

Announcing the Opening
BRANDED
GENERIC DRUGS
DISTRIBUTION CENTER
Unimed Inc.

FPJ no better than GMA, says Patriots

By Christian V. Esguerra

[illegible] allegations of an "unholy alliance" between their camp and that of presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., the anti-electoral fraud watchdog Patriots yesterday distanced it self from the actor, and said it was against destabilization moves and military adventurism.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo has failed the country and I don't think Fpje can do any better," Patriots convenor Fr. Jose Dizon said. "We don't care who wins as long as the victory was a result of credible elections."

Military intelligence reports leaked there was an alliance between what is alleged was the "communist-backed and funded" Patriots and the President's political rivals involving a purported destabilization plot.

Dizon all but dismissed this even if the presidential candidate is represented in the "multi-sectoral" alliance Patriots had formed in its campaign alleged massive cheating during the May 10 elections.

He said the only time Poe's camp that had sought their help as an "aggrieved" party saying the vote was anyway had been cheated. Dizon said his group merely "listened" to the complaint, then proceeded with its own campaign against electoral fraud.

The campaign later brought under one of [illegible] lawyer with other candidates such as evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva and Sen. Nerilla Lozon, together with militant groups like Bayan Muna, Migrante, Anakpawis and Sanlakas/Sanggunian.

Dizon said Patriots and its allies nonetheless only to discourage any of election fraud, adding that even Malacañang could submit its own evidence of cheating to dispel suggestions that it was behind the alleged threat.

The alliance would submit a comprehensive report on their findings to the Commission on Elections Wednesday until the "restart of public opinion." "This is an honest to goodness campaign," Dizon said. "We will not prevent the truth and allow the people to move on."

Still, authorities are keeping a close watch on Patriots and other groups suspected of planning to prevent May 10 Macapagal's proclamation in the event she won the presidential race.

"We will not allow anyone to sabotage the canvassing of votes," said Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, police spokesperson.

At least 800 anti-riot policemen backed by Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) members deployed around the Batasan complex for the joint congressional canvassing of presidential and vice presidential votes. Crowd dispersal teams have also been stationed along the main roads leading to the complex.

Don't waste money on fake hand trucks that rust & break

DEXTERTON CORPORATION

Students to protest extra year of school

MILITANT high school students won't be looking for their grades on school opening day. They would be busy protesting the Department of Education's controversial "bridge program" on June 21.

Chino de Vera of the League of Filipino Students (High School), said that adding a year to high school would be an added burden on parents, students and their teachers.

"We are planning protest actions on school opening," she said.

Although Deped already announced last Monday the High School Readiness Test (HSRT) on all incoming freshmen in the public high schools, Dr. Bro said they would to cut the program to six weeks.

A Deped official said half of the 1.4 million students or 700,000 freshmen would definitely have to go through the one year refresher program on English, Science and Math before they can move on to the regular four-year high school curriculum.

But the Deped needs the National Economic Development Authority's final approval before it could implement the program next year.

"It's an artificial program that does not address the problem of the poor quality of education. What we need is a bigger budget," De Vera said.

Dona J. Pazzibugan

KINGDOM OF A HIGHER WORLD

An **I**nvitation to **C**hurch **L**eaders
To **A**n **E**quipping **E**xperience
For **T**wenty-**F**irst **C**entury **R**ealities

Speakers Rev. BUTCH CONDE
and Rev. BABES PAULATE

Friday June 4, 2004 • 5:00 to 9:00pm • Crossroad 77
Mother Ignacia Avenue cor. Sct. Reyes St., Quezon City

- Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight ..."* – JOHN 18:36
- *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways . . . Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, And instead of briers the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign which will not be destroyed."* – ISAIAH 55:8-13

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED
Limited slots only. ☐ Please e-mail to breadl@skynet.net or text to Mobile No: 0927-650-7154 the following information: *Your last name, first name • Tel. No. • Church • Ministry Position*

PHILSA PHILIPPINE SHIPBUILDERS AND REPAIRERS ASSOCIATION

ONLY IN OUR BELOVED COUNTRY

- The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) fines publicly listed Negros Navigation Company a paltry ₱75,000 for ***violating disclosure rules of the Commission***. In today's current realities, the amount is a lame excuse for a penalty and only ***shows that it is cheap to violate SEC rules***.

- Negros Navigation has ***unpaid taxes amounting to over ₱440 million*** which carry with it certain criminal liabilities. Are there special arrangements with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for the non-payment of same? Perhaps other companies may also be allowed to avail of this arrangement.

- Negros Navigation claimed to have had ***positive net cash for operating activities of ₱470,629,038 and ₱306,037,726 for 2002 and 2003 respectively based on Audited Financial Statements they submitted to the SEC***. What happened to the cash? Why weren't trade suppliers paid? Why were taxes not remitted? Then suddenly, they ***file for Corporate Rehabilitation with the RTC-Manila effectively shielding them from claims of their creditors/trade suppliers and even the government***.

Negros Navigation should not be allowed to hide behind a Court Mandated Rehabilitation because it will be disadvantageous to the government and to trade suppliers especially SHIP REPAIRERS who have superior maritime liens.

DFA sends probe team to Lebanon

By Jovanie Aning

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Delia Albert has sent a team to Lebanon to investigate the mysterious deaths of three Filipino domestic riers and to make sure that justice would be served.

The team is composed of Senior Undersecretary Ruth Pantoja and Bert Salvador from the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs.

Fernandez said Salvador would not only coordinate with police authorities in Lebanon for a thorough probe of the cases, they would also investigate allegations that Philippine embassy officials there committed lapses that indirectly led to the death of one of the three Filipinos.

The three victims were Susan Montenegro, who died on Feb. 24; Cachetee Bautista, who died on May 3, and a still unnamed third victim, who died on May 16. Her relatives remain anonymous because her family has not given permission to reveal her identity.

In Bautista's case, her family backed embassy officials in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, for telling the domestic to return to her employer, while she had accused of maltreating her. Bautista had also reportedly expressed her concern about her personal safety to embassy officials.

Claims vs staff

Albert said she was aware of the claims filed against the Philippine embassy staff in Beirut.

"The department gives the highest importance to the protection of Filipinos overseas and takes allegations against our embassies very seriously," she said.

Deeper reasons

"We are looking into deeper, and possibly systemic reasons, behind these cases, given the similarities that they share," the secretary said. All three victims fell to their deaths while trying to climb out of the apartments of their employers.

They were also undocumented workers, having entered Lebanon on tourist visas.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that Airfreight 2100, Inc., which owns the trademark AIR21, the Total Logistics Solutions Provider, is operating and transacting business within the Philippines and has no operations abroad.

The logo AIR21, Sagot ko, Padala Mo! is owned by Airfreight 2100, Inc. Any unauthorized use of the said logo or its tagline will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

AIR 21

Sgd. Atty. Bianca Lee Ofilada
Chief, Legal Division

ELECTION Puhinga Tours

US TOURS

BEST OF EUROPE

Adam's

Gov't not interested in taking over Naia 3

THE GOVERNMENT has no plans of taking over the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3, as feared by former General Alfredo Benipayo, trusted that any public official who agrees to acquire the unfinished $450-million project in an behalf would be liable for impeachment, plunder and graft.

Benipayo made the statement ahead of the scheduled meeting between the government and the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) on June 14 in Singapore as part of the presidential negotiations under the 102 dictate for port-to-port arbitration to decide the terms of reference.

The terms of reference will contain the summaries of claims and counterclaims of the two parties, the place of arbitration and other issues.

"Any government official who agrees to acquire the terminal without a careful, definite and reliable assessment of these stringent requirements will be liable for impeachment, plunder and graft," Benipayo said in a statement issued yesterday.

ANOS FIRETRUCK

BUY PINOY

THE SPECIALIST FOR EVERY LAMINATING JOB

FUJIPLA LAMIPACKER

HUNTER TRADING CO., INC.

R&A IMMIGRATION SOLUTIONS BY REEVES & ASSOCIATES

24 Years Of Excellent Service To The Business & Immigrant Communities

- ROA represents hundreds of Hospitals in California and throughout the U.S. that have immediate RN & PT openings
- Devoted exclusively to the practice of immigration & nationality law
- Successfully immigrated more than 10,000 Filipino families
- Telephone or Tele-video conference with an immigration expert
- Case Information System allowing clients on-line access to their files 24 hours a day
- ROA is the firm that other attorneys send their clients when their cases are too difficult or complicated
- ROA is one of the largest, oldest and most trusted immigration firms in the United States

ROBERT L. REEVES
Attorney & Board Certified Specialist
Immigration & Nationality Law (USA)

Call (02) 759-6777

YOU DESERVE TO BE REPRESENTED BY THE VERY BEST

PASADENA • SAN FRANCISCO • BEIJING • MANILA

www.reeves.com e-mail: rr@reeves.com

ALL ROADS LEAD TO . . . . .

Anson Auto Service Center

NOW OPEN

WE PROUDLY INTRODUCE THE BEST AND MOST ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY IN AUTO MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT AT LOWEST PRICES!

DRIVE IN FOR A CHECK-UP!

SEE THE DIFFERENCE AND FEEL THE RESULTS.

THIS WAY

THIS WAY

Biazon hangs on 'by his fingernails' to 12th spot

[illegible] opposition bets were reports that the Biazon family lost bear righted in Cavite City.

Special elections

Voter [illegible] 200 precincts in Lanao del Sur where special elections were conducted on May 11 and years of Cotabato City will determine who between Biazon and Barbers will occupy the 12th seat.

Comelec figures show that Cotabato City has 117,025 votes while the 200 Lanao del Sur precincts have 50,149 votes, for a total of 205,229 votes.

Biazon was ahead of Barbers by 130,955 votes on May 23. Biazon's lead rose to 132,994 on the morning of May 24.

But Biazon's lead was reduced to 51,496 on the night of May 24 when votes from Lanao del Sur and Cotabato City were counted.

Barbers, who is from Mindanao, got most votes from Biazon from these provinces.

Yesterday, Biazon's lead went up to 59,740 votes after a copy of the Garnipacao certificate of canvass was presented. Biazon got 89,078 votes in Garnipacao and Barbers 41,511.

Cabinet posts

Malacañang yesterday said that the five losing K-4 senatorial candidates need not resign from their posts in the Cabinet.

But K-4 senatorial candidates who lost were Robert Jaworski, Orlando Mercado, John Osmeña, Bayani Fernando and Dilber Biazon of Barbers.

Presidential campaign manager Gabriel Claudio said "their role in the coalition will be regarded with as much importance and appreciation as ever."

The law prohibits the appointment of losing candidates for a year after the elections.

At the same time, discussions would move along that line," said presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

He noted that the K-4 senatorial candidates who did not make it to the Magic 12 were "special personnel" for Cabinet positions.

Bunye said President Macapagal-Arroyo had accomplished the whole round of "fighting well and fighting hard."

Ms Macapagal yesterday offered reconciliation to the opposition senatorial-elect even as the administration opposed headed for a "comfortable majority" in the next Senate.

"I would like to congratulate the newly proclaimed senators of the republic," she said in a statement. "It was a hard fought and hard earned victory for them."

Mr Macapagal attended the Comelec proclamation of the 11 winning senators at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) on Tuesday night.

After the proclamation, the President had a dinner to mingle with the new senators during cocktails and she even had a brief "civil" encounter with her closest rival, presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Conciliatory

"Despite this will join the march for national unity and reconciliation as we face the difficult task ahead," she said.

"Our people look forward to a transparent and vigorous debate on the issues and aspirations of the poor and forge ahead in meeting the nation's most pressing issues, especially those affecting the lives of the average Filipino," Ms Macapagal said.

The President's conciliatory gesture was [illegible] of the five senator-elect from the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino—Jinggoy Estrada, Juan Ponce Enrile and Edgardo Angara.

Six of those proclaimed were from the administration K-4 coalition—Bunye, Revilla, Gordon, Cayetano, Defensor-Santiago and Lapid.

Invitation

Biazon said GMA Macapagal-Arroyo had given her congratulations during the proclamation rites at the PICC.

The President's appearance was unscheduled but Abalos said her time the other proclaimed candidates had been invited as well, according to Bunye.

Ms Macapagal has already made peace overtures with Lacson, her former ally who accused her and her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo of keeping secret "Jose Pidal" accounts.

Still some misgivings about the administration would have 14 senators-in-the-bag in the next Senate, while the opposition would have nine.

If he wins the vice presidential race, Mr Lacson's seat is likely to stay vacant until a special election is held to fill it.

Want to be an advocate of social change?

Join the 5th National Youth Parliament

October 27-29, 2004
Legaspi City, Albay

- Be a part of the network of youth leaders working for social change
- Formulate policies addressing youth concerns
- Be a youth advocate in partnership with the NYC to pursue youth development efforts
- Take part in the validation of the Medium Term Youth Development Plan (MTYDP) 2005-2010

Who may participate

- Filipino citizen, between 15 to 30 years old
- Residing, studying, or working at the place/institution for not less than six (6) months
- Must represent a youth organization (NGO, PO, government entities, schools, LGUs, religious groups, tribal communities and the like)
- Must not be a member of the past National Youth Parliaments
- Must be an SK Provincial President, if representing the Sangguniang Kabataan
- Must not have been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude.

DEADLINE: July 31, 2004

Requirements

- Application letter to the 5th NYP (one copy)
- Accomplished NYP application form, five (5) copies. DOWNLOAD A COPY @ www.youth.net.ph
- Brief resume, not more than 3 pages, one (1) copy
- 2"x 2" photos, five (5) pieces
- Certified true copy of birth certificate, one (1) copy
- Certificate of residency from barangay, one (1) copy
- Self addressed letter envelope, with twenty pesos (P20.00) worth of stamps on each envelope, two (2) pieces
- Nomination from youth organization being represented (NGOs, POs, LGUs, government agencies, schools, religious groups, and community based organizations, tribal groups, etc..)
- One (1) research paper to be presented in the 5th NYP
  Thesis/dissertation or a case study on the Situation of the Filipino Youth obtained from regional / provincial, municipal, school, government agencies, NGOs, POs, and related institutions on the six (6) Youth issues namely
  1. Employment 2. Education 3. Health
  4. Values 5. Youth Participation
  6. Youth with Special Needs

For inquiries, please contact the NYP Secretariat

NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION
[illegible]
national youth parliament

Marcos wealth trial in Hawaii postponed

HONOLULU—A suspect trial to determine the ownership of about $40 million reportedly belonging to the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos has been delayed for two months.

A hearing scheduled Monday before visiting US Bankruptcy Judge Manuel L. Real got a continuance to July 12, the court clerk's office said.

Attorneys representing a class action on behalf of 9,539 Filipinos who successfully sued the Marcos estate for human rights abuses are trying to recover the $40 million to cover paying a $2 billion judgment awarded to them by a Honolulu jury in 1996.

To date, no payment has been made on the judgment, which has grown to more than $3.1 billion with interest.

The $40 million is separate from some $683 million in Swiss bank assets that the Supreme Court awarded to the Philippine government last July. Plaintiffs' attorneys contended that Marcos, his family and cronies illegally obtained $1 billion that were stashed away in various accounts around the world.

The Filipinos in the class action suit said that Marcos came to Hawaii after he died in exile in 1989. In 1995, a Honolulu jury awarded the plaintiffs $2 billion after finding Marcos responsible for summary executions, disappearances and torture. *AP*

Proclaim party-list winners, group asks

WITH MORE than a million votes to be won, the left-leaning Bayan Muna yesterday asked the Commission on Elections to proclaim the winning party-list groups so that the poll body could concentrate on other election tasks.

In a petition filed yesterday, Bayan Muna said the leading 13 party-list groups—Apec, Akbayan, Buhay, Bantayan, Gabriela, Ultra, PM, Bisig, Alyansa, APE, VFP (BALAO), Coop-Nat-co and Ta Wagas—"seem" to have qualified and "are garnered more than two percent of the votes each.

As of May 23, Bayan Muna said there were only 2.28 million votes left to be canvassed. These are the votes from the provinces of Sindor, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Basilan, Cotabato City, Zamboanga City, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Isabela.

Results from some of these provinces are under question in the number of votes cast for party-list groups that were more than the number of registered voters, Bayan Muna said.

However, the number of votes involved would not affect the results of the party-list elections, it said.

"Assuming that Bayan Muna will not get any vote from the remaining areas to be canvassed, if Bayan Muna will still be able to get an 8.46 percent share of the total votes cast for the party-list elections [and thus be entitled to at least three seats," the group said.

As of May 23, only 12,630,000 out of the 43.5 million votes cast went to the party-list groups.

Of this figure, Bayan Muna got 1,047,834 votes, or 18.05 percent of the total votes cast for the party-list elections.

But based on the May 24 figures released yesterday by the Comelec, Bayan Muna's percentage of the vote went down to 8.99 percent.

Apec got 900,200 or 7.20 percent, Akbayan was in the third bracket with 657,000 or 5 percent, while Buhay was fourth with 716,356 or 5.59 percent.

Another militant group, Anakpawis, was in fifth place with 538,039 or 4.47 percent. Ultra with 494,853 or 4.16 percent, and Gabriela with 451,035 or 3.64 percent. Martin F. Sadongdong

SUPER BRAND PLATINUM 2004
SUPER BRAND GOLD 2003
SUPER BRAND GOLD 2002
SUPER BRAND GOLD 2001
SUPER BRAND GOLD 2000
SUPER BRAND GOLD 1999

PILOT
SUPER MARKER

Available in: black, red, blue/green, violet, green, orange, yellow

Philippine Exclusive Distributor:
COSMOS BAZAR, INC.
270 Q. PAREDES ST., BINONDO, MANILA
P.O. BOX 1661 TEL. 3068716 to 20/387
PILOT CORPORATION
Tokyo, Japan

The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Garcia

Bush vows continued US stay in Iraq

CARLISLE, Pennsylvania—President George W. Bush, trying to dispel rising doubts about the war, declared the United States would stay in Iraq until it was free and democratic and suggested more US soldiers might have to be sent to keep enemy forces from overpowering the new government.

"There are difficult days ahead, and the war is not over. Iraq sometimes appears chaotic," he said. "The terrorists and Saddam loyalists would either see many troops die in Iraq or lay low in hideouts, but terrorism will not determine the future of Iraq."

In a prime-time address Monday night at the US Army War College, he also promised to introduce the first Orlandi prison bill has become an ugly symbol of the US occupation.

Five months before the US presidential election, violence in Iraq has helped push down Bush's approval rating to a near low and his increased skepticism about his handling of the war.

Democratic rival John Kerry said Bush's speech broke no new ground and "what's most important now is to spur those words in to actions by offering presidential leadership to the nation and to the world. That's going to require the president to genuinely reach out to our allies so the United States doesn't have to continue to go it alone and to create the stability and security the people of Iraq so desperately need."

Bush outlined five steps that he said would help Iraq achieve democracy and freedom, transferring authority to a sovereign new Iraq government on June 30, helping establish security in areas still gripped by chaos, urging broader international support, accelerating the security and training top notch all elsewhere.

"Completing the five steps to Iraqi freedom will give coalition will not be easy," Bush said. "There is likely to be violence before the transfer of sovereignty and after the transfer of sovereignty."

He said that the United States would keep its troop level at the current 138,000 as long as necessary and that commanders were constantly reassessing needs. "If they need more troops, I will send them," Bush pledged.

The current top US officers in Iraq, Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, will be replaced by a full general of rank, according to reports by NBC News, The New York Times and The Washington Post. Gen. George Casey, the Army's No. 2 officer in vice chief of staff, was said to be in line for the post.

Bush spoke for slightly more 40 minutes in a gymnasium converted to a speech hall. The bunker-ball nets were removed and a makeshift stage assembled for Bush, complete with teleprompter. Hundreds of uniformed military personnel listened, respectfully, applauding several times.

With nearly 800 US soldiers killed so far in Iraq, Bush warned that the violence would continue.

He talked of the insurrection this month of the president of the Iraqi Governing Council, Iyadhe Salawi, and the beheading of American civilian Nicholas Berg, but he continued to express his resolve, saying, "No picture of the enemy will stop Iraq's progress."

He said coalition forces and Iraqis have the same enemies—terrorists, illegal militia and loyalists of Saddam Hussein. AP

Australia, Japan welcome latest US moves on Iraq

TOKYO—Among US allies Australia and Japan praised President's latest moves on Iraq, with Canberra welcoming President George W. Bush's pledge to stay in the country until it is democratic and Tokyo commending his move to seek a UN mandate for more multinational troops there.

Australia's Prime Minister John Howard said he endorsed the US president's pledge, adding that Australian troops would remain in Iraq even though opinion polls showed support for the deployment was slipping.

Australia sent 2,000 troops to take part in the invasion of Iraq and still has 850 military personnel in and around the country.

"This government has absolutely no intention of drawing our forces in relation to being part of the coalition of Iraq," Howard told parliament. "We did not enter the coalition on the basis of opinion polls last year... and we have absolutely no intention on the basis of opinion polls of dictating our participation at the present time."

Howard's comments came before news of a car bombing Tuesday in central Baghdad near the Australian Embassy. Iraqi police believe the embassy may have been the target and that the car detonated prematurely, injuring five Iraqis. Australia said its troops in Iraq were investigating.

Bush, in remarks seen only Tuesday in Asia, outlined his vision for Iraq following the planned handover of sovereignty to its people next month. The speech coincided with a new $96 billion package introduced by Prime Minister Koizumi's government to help rebuild Iraq.

The resolution would create a new UN mandate for US-led forces in Iraq that would be reviewed after a year—or earlier if a transitional government does not take power after January elections expected.

Japan welcomed the draft resolution and said it looked forward to cooperating with other countries to help rebuild Iraq.

"We hope a new resolution will be adopted to guarantee the security and stability of Iraq by Iraqis," Hosoda said. "We would like to work closely with other countries."

Tokyo has long advocated more UN involvement in Iraq, which would lift public backing for Tokyo's dispatch of troops to the southern part of the country.

Japan has sent about 950 ground troops to Iraq and hundreds more air and naval forces to the region on a humanitarian mission to support the US-led coalition.

The United States and Japan will need to negotiate with longtime critics of the Iraq war, such as France and Germany, on the resolution, both Bush and Koizumi are discussing a greater role for Iraq's interim government in security issues.

Japanese and South Korean media, meanwhile, said Bush's speech appeared aimed at bolstering support both at home and abroad after the prisoner abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib. AP

(Right) A statue of Cosimo I de' Medici, Duke of Florence, is seen on the scaffolding, as work on Michelangelo's marble statue of David, in Florence, central Italy, in this Sept. 15, 2003 file photo. The restored "David" was presented to the audience in Florence's Accademia Gallery, Italy, on Monday. AP

Michaelangelo's statue of David undergoes cleaning

ROME—The eight-month cleaning of Michelangelo's statue of David is complete, the Florentine museum which houses the Italian Renaissance masterpiece said on Monday, almost four months ahead of its 500th anniversary celebrations.

The cleaning of the 5.5-ton statue—a process to delicate to remove compared it to washing a baby's skin—sparked controversy among art historians before it began in 2002, with some saying it was unnecessary.

Franca Falletti, director of the Accademia Gallery in Florence, said the statue would be scrutinized in the light of newly acquired knowledge of its structure and would then be examined and cleaned eight months a year.

During the cleaning, hairline cracks were discovered in the soles of the statue and in pieces of supporting marble behind and below the head.

The statue, representing the Biblical shepherd and political who went on to become king of Israel after slaying the Philistine giant Goliath, stood in the open air from 1504 until 1873.

Michelangelo's David, his best-known work after the Sistine Chapel fresco in the Vatican, attracts more than 1.2 million visitors every year.

Museum experts said the statue was now more luminous and that its outlines "catch the light and shadow in a more balanced way."

"The marble has been restored to its natural color. Its hairs, the right thigh and other areas which had suffered minor damage," according to both Falletti and Giulio Ienalini, who oversaw the restoration project.

"David's color has not changed because the cleaning was very light, let us say minimalist," added historian Paolucci, superintendent of Florence's museums.

"A few stains have unfolded and the restoration has shut down any doubts." AFP

Arctic fast melting, portends global warming, says study

OSLO—Global warming is hitting the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet to what may be a portent of wider, catastrophic changes, the chief of an eight-nation study said on Monday.

Sea ice is melting more frequently through the thinning ice with holes to ice floats and animals are submerged. The ice "Bottom line is Canada could be uninhabitable for polar bears within just 20 years.

The melting is also destabilizing buildings on permafrost and threatening an oil pipeline bed across Alaska.

Beaches, ice humans can survive, might occur from the opening up of a new largely uninhabited shortcut sea route from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Russia angled the idea in a report to the UN and gets at the low up the tides and permafrost retreats.

The broader consequences are however disturbing.

"There is dramatic climate change happening in the Arctic right now, about 2-3 times the pace of the whole globe," said Robert Corell, chair of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). An 1,000-page report to be handed to ministers in Iceland in November.

"If you want to know what's the new will be you're going to see in until generation, which will be the locus in the next 5, 10 years," he said. The report confirms in part local scientists, indigenous peoples and eight Arctic the nations.

The Arctic events most to global warming, blamed largely on emissions of gases like carbon dioxide from fossil fuels in cars and factories, partly because of slash-and-burn deforestation, once exposed, tends up heat for basic than white ice or snow. Reuters

General in charge of Abu Ghraib prison suspended

WASHINGTON—The Army general in charge of the US prison guards accused of abusing Iraqi POWs suspended from command of the 800th Military Police Brigade, officials said Monday.

Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski and other officers in her brigade were faulted by Army investigators for failing adequately to supervise the prison's day-to-day operations and not acting strongly enough to discipline soldiers under her command for violating standard procedures.

Karpinski's suspension, which has not been announced by the Army, was the latest in a series of actions against officers and enlisted soldiers implicated in the abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad.

Pentagon spokesman Jerome Hicks received the maximum penalty of a year in prison and a bad conduct discharge in the first courtmartial involving those the abuse of Iraqis in the prison. He was among seven members of the 372nd Military Police Company that have been charged.

Karpinski, who has retained in the United States, has not been charged with an offense. Being suspended from her command does not mean she has been relieved of command, as technically she could be reinstated, although the intensity of the international furor over the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse makes that highly unlikely, said the officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.

In an interview on MSNBC Monday night, Karpinski said she has been told of her suspension by "several sources, but I have nothing in writing." The paperwork will go the reason for her suspension, she said. AP

Israel pulls out of Gaza refugee camp

GAZA—Israeli forces ended a six-day siege in a Gaza refugee camp that left at least 40 Palestinians dead, destroyed dozens of homes and sparked international outrage.

But as the last soldiers withdrew from the Rafah camp late on Monday, the military said it would return to destroy weapons smuggling tunnels as deemed necessary.

"I don't know if I can say 'Operation Rainbow' is over. We can [adding a deep breath and] this goes on," a senior military official said.

As the Army loosened its grip and thousands of mourners chanted for revenge, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon lobbied hardline ministers over a gradual Gaza pullout plan he intends to put to a referendum very soon.

Many residents returning set to Rafah's Tel Sultan and Brazil district bagged for some as they confronted demolished homes, flattened greenhouses and torn-up streets littered with torn sewage of an Israeli tanks rumbled out.

"It looks like an earthquake hit," resident Samir Raja said.

The Army said its forces had withdrawn after destroying three weapons smuggling tunnels in the camp, but Israeli media outlets said the operation was not short after military officials concluded it was not meeting its objectives.

The Army also lifted a blockade that had cut Rafah off from the rest of the Gaza Strip for nearly a week, saying it was easing conditions for the beleaguered population.

Israel launched the Rafah operation after 13 soldiers were killed in ambushes. The army said its goal was to root out militants and shut down tunnels used to smuggle arms across the border from Egypt.

The US-based agency UNRWA and other rights groups said the army had demolished some 300 homes.

Maj. Gen. Dan Halutz said 56 "dead ends" were destroyed or badly damaged when weapons smuggling tunnels were blown up, gunmen's positions attacked or when heavy armor was used to clear explosives planted by militants.

Giving a higher death toll than that reported by Palestinians, military officials said troops had killed around 40 "terrorists" during fighting and at least seven civilians.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie condemned the attack anew—which had also drawn a new US rebuke against the Jewish state—as "outgoing, desired criminal aggression."

Televised images of refugees combing the rubble sparked a world outcry and even caused a rare uncle Sharon's Cabinet.

Justice Minister Yosef Lapid, a Holocaust survivor, touched a nerve by saying the sight of an elderly Palestinian woman searching the ruins reminded him of his grandmother, or who died in a Nazi death camp. He said further destruction could force his counterparts to consider its role in Sharon's coalition.

Sharon said on Sunday he was determined to push through a step by step plan to withdraw from Gaza and several of the 120 West Bank Jewish settlements despite his right-wing Likud party's rejection of the pullout in a May 2 referendum.

Violence has spiked in the Gaza Strip since Sharon introduced his unilateral "disengagement" strategy and won US backing for it.

Militants want to declare victory in any Israeli pullout but the army is determined to smash their before leaving.

Political sources said Sharon would present an amended plan to a hot-stage evaluation of 7,500 Israeli settlers, who form a heavily guarded Gaza settlement amid 1.3 million Palestinians, at the next cabinet meeting scheduled for May 30. Reuters

Oil spill detected around sunken ship off Singapore

SINGAPORE—A small oil spill has been spotted around a ship carrying 950 tons of fuel oil and 3,000 cars that sank after colliding with an oil tanker, an Indonesian official said Tuesday.

Indonesian Coast Guard officers detected the spill where the MV Hyundai No. 105 is lying in 1,200-foot-deep waters eight km off Singapore, Indonesian Embassy spokesperson Yeri Gunadi said.

"We have deployed oil booms to prevent the spread and a skimmer to remove the oil from the sea surface," Gunadi said. "But it is still minor, it is not a serious problem yet."

Gunadi said Indonesian Coast Guard officers reported the spill Monday afternoon, but the exact operations could not immediately confirm it.

"This is news to us," said spokesperson Bernie Pfau of Eukor Car Carriers. "This is unconfirmed. We are sending an envoy to verify it with the Indonesian Embassy."

The Panama-registered car carrier said Sunday after a head-on collision with oil tanker MT Sammaya, which was carrying about 280,000 barrels of crude oil in a busy shipping lane just south of Singapore.

All 24 Filipino crew of the Korean and 12 Filipinos abandoned ship 15 minutes before a sank in Indonesian waters with a cargo valued at $40 million, Kahar said.

The collision cost a 365.2m-by-66.4m hole in the side of the vessel, but Eukor has maintained its fuel tanks stayed intact and no oil had detected no oil leak. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

5 hurt in Baghdad blast

BAGHDAD—A car bomb exploded Tuesday near a hotel in central Baghdad, and a US military official said five Iraqis were injured, one critically. [illegible] the largest may have been the detonation of [illegible] mortar shells from the Kuwaiti border. Witnesses said about 10 bombs from the Kuwaiti border, where foreign soldiers and UN weapons inspectors used to stay, before the war that ousted Saddam Hussein. US Army Col. Mike Murray said the car that exploded near a blue Volkswagen Beetle was full of explosives. Reuters

S. Korean premier resigns

SEOUL—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Goh Kun on Tuesday, setting the stage for a Cabinet reshuffle as he confronts full duties after two months of impeachment trials. Goh, who served as acting president during Roh's impeachment trial, resigned on Monday after he had declined repeated requests from the pro-presidential Uri Party to reconsider three days. Cabinet reshuffle. The replacement of the ministers, culture and health ministers, which had been expected this week, would be put off for a month, Roh said. Reuters

Airport roof collapses

PARIS, France—Nine crushing rounds forced the evacuation Monday of the terminal of a Moscow international Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport, where a roof collapse killed five travelers. The scare to the Soviet-shaped terminal 2E came as officials worked to recover high-tech, office-type of concrete, glass and steel canopy crushing down Sunday at the busiest airport in the world's most touristic country. Travelers can expect longer check-in lines and more crowded shops and restaurants at the airport during the peak summer traffic season, officials said. Authorities lowered the death toll to four from five, saying earlier days but cautioned it is considering could an [illegible] the unexpected remains of the fifth victim that collapsed. AP

God excluded from charter

WARSAW, Poland—Pope said Monday broadened acceptance behind by Poland partially to overcome a controversy to [illegible] Christian values in [illegible] Union constitutions new being finalized. "I think the text, as is, is a balanced one," said. French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said. "The text already includes a number soft findings." At an EU meeting Economic differences on the constitution, the foreign ministers from Poland, Italy, Portugal, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia and the Czech Republic proposed a "further attention to a reference to the Christian roots of Europe" in the draft. AP

Cut & Save!

Fill out this form and fax to 840-5771 or 816-7806. The first 50 approved applicants will get a surprise gift.

Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Cellphone No: _____

Email Address: _____

Cut your monthly amortization.
Save with our low interest rates.

Feel like a winner with the better deal!

- Low interest rates
- Easy-to-pay monthly amortization
- Long payment terms
- Fast approval
- Convenient application and payment through any of our branches nationwide

Apply now!

METROHOME FINANCING

You're in good hands with METROBANK

ISSN 0116-2442 INQUIRER Vol. XXVI, No. 149

OPINION

Publisher Isabel Pavia
Editor-in-Chief Larry Jayme Pascasio
Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Nolasco
Associate Editor Alejandro N. Olivarez
Deputy Editor Antonio T. Enriquez Jr. • Chief News Copy Desk Noe B. Pascual
Opinion Editor Jose V. Abueg
National Editor Florentino B. Rosario Jr.
City Editor Gavin Lee
Senior Desk Editor Romulo A. Garcia Jr.
Editor for Graphics Benjamin Dimayuga
Chief Photographer Jay V. Galvadores
Art & Design Director Joseph A. Viscara

Board of Trustees Philip K. Pedro
President Sandalwood Pedro Fernandez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Antonio R. Ramos
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Hendrik Valles
Office Administrator Faith R. Guarin
Ad Sales Consultants Elena P. Lamberto

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including recording or other electronic methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

On edge

THE COUNTRY is on edge, even as it teeters on the edge. The country is nervous, while our politicians begin a struggle in Congress that threatens to unleash uncontrollable forces that this election was meant to dispel. We must choose between responsibility and unbelief, or one kind, or damaging party and extralegal opportunism, on the other.

EDITORIAL

We must begin by appreciating the particularly peculiar situation in which the country is in. To begin with, we are told to be ashamed that we still don't know who has the mandate to lead us, while India has managed to do so in seeming record time. But we cannot look to the Indian example because the elections there largely involved many individual contests. It all we had to do was finish the counting of local elections, then we could boast of near-Indian efficiency since the results of many local (including congressional) contests were known within 48 hours of the election. The truth is, there was no national vote in parliamentary fields. They merely added up the winning individual contests, and derived a mandate from that.

Instead we are stuck with the American model of legal wrangling in the wake of a close national election, such as what happened in Florida in 2000. With one crucial difference: In the fields, even viciously, contested American elections, those leading the fight both assumed they were winners. Both sides rallied on national elders of their party to head their loyal troops. What is happening now, in contrast, is that while both the leading candidates, Fernando Poe Jr. and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, consider themselves winners, the camp of the opposition, for one, has had its rhetoric hijacked by the losers. (Are the other hand, the administration is counting on the mechanistics of its win partisans sitting in office to do its bidding.

This is an important distinction that has profound consequences for how events will turn out. The opposition has had the more sober voices within its ranks drowned out by those undeterred by sane debate. Even Poe has taken pains in recent days to issue more sober pronouncements. Poe's new focus on responsibility and restraint has been echoed by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. Poe has always been ambivalent about getting people to march in the streets, while Pimentel, as a senatorial-elect, has a vested interest in maintaining constitutional order.

But Poe and Pimentel are in the minority. Their party mates, which include losing senatorial and congressional candidates, have nothing to lose by trying to hijack the process. If their great gamble to delay the proclamation of the next president fails, they at least stalled the situation for all it was worth. On the other hand, people with conservative instincts, such as Poe, and an ironclad mandate to serve such as Pimentel, have everything to lose if the constitutional order yields to anarchy and mass action.

The administration, on the other hand, is hounded by the suspicion that it will stop at nothing, whether a legalistic rationalizing, a timely veiled military order or something, or the unleashing of conspiracy theories, to intimidate its opponents.

The administration and the opposition then are both faced by a hard choice between the responsible leaders in their ranks, and the desperate forces trying to wrest control over the coming days' events. The country in turn must choose whether it will look for guidance from those who, having received a mandate, will preserve that mandate by preserving constitutional processes or those then all-too-ready in favor of those who have nothing to lose.

The only ones who have nothing to lose are the politicians in the periphery in league with radicals whose paramount interest has always been the destruction of our constitutional democracy. Neither of these forces have anything in common with the overwhelming majority of Filipinos who want peace, a cessation to six years of political jitters, and a return to a more normal and tranquil order of things.

We are faced with the tyranny of the minority. It is incumbent on all parties, on all sides, regardless of the candidates they support, to make the system work. It can be done—but only if every side makes sure that it is not held hostage by losers.

New faces in the Senate

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

A MORE pleasant aspect of the results of the senatorial elections is that eight of the previously unknown candidates are now faces in the Senate and only four are old enemies. The new faces are Pia Cayetano and Jamby Madrigal (although their faces did get limited family exposure during their movie days), Jinggoy Estrada, Jun Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada (who were ex-officio senators). Mar Roxas and Richard Gordon (although they, too, were from political dynasties) and Alfredo Lim, also a veteran in politics. The four incumbents are Nene Pimentel, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile and possibly Robert Jr. Blanco. As have never-before-elected senators in the former did not make it to the winning circle.

What this means is that the voters are finally waking up and giving need of the major one-time and running their lives for decades. Also, that the voters know who the do-nothings are in the Senate, such as Robert Jaworski and his fellow-do-less Ramon Revilla Jr., although the voters wonder why they made the latter's son and namesake, Bong Revilla, No. 2 among the new senators.

Also an indication that some voters are starting to their senses and getting tired of political dynasties is the agony vote of newcomers Ms. Grace Carlo Padaca in Isabela, Vice Ragos in Cotabato, Bong and Bete Revilla in Cavite, Jinggoy Estrada, Jun Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada (who were ex-officio senators). Also, the defeat of husband-and-wife teams such as Bey and Tigi Medalla in Calbayog, and Joey Marquez and Alma Moreno in Tarlac. Joey Marquez received a joke that goes like this: Bey and Gigi and Joey and Alma have signed up for a new TV encounter. It's titled, "Eto Na Naman, Ella at Marc").

Other members of political dynasties were also defeated in their home territories. John Lim in Zamboanga who comes from the very old and very big Sinsuat clan of Cotta, Mel Mathay and his wife were in Quezon City and more others.

The sad part is that many more members of political dynasties were still elected, and what in spite of a concentrated ban against political dynasties, such families unashamedly fielded SPOUSES for those seats, not for the mother of one of them, but in many cases are even older young ones. Some of my colleagues don't have too much hope for the run-in-law Cielo Calaunan members rather than say that Pemia is a daughter of the governor (who) and Gov. Cecilia Gonzalez (who) and Gov. Gonzalez (who) and Gov. Gonzalez (who) and Gov.

Final say on presidential canvass

THE SUPREME COURT may find itself upon in the center of political controversy if the opposition Senators-elect decide to question the constitutionality of congressional rules that would create a joint canvassing committee to canvass the votes for president and vice president.

The canvassing of votes for president and vice president is not part of the legislative powers of Congress. Neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives may invoke the constitutional provisions of Section 18 Article VI of the Constitution to argue that Congress has the responsibility of determining who have been duly elected in those offices. In addition to legislative functions, Congress was made to perform canvassing or "ascertaining" duties.

The Congressional or Congress-as-the-canvassing-body is understandable. Since the election of the highest official of the land (and the person who will take over in case of his or her inability to continue in office) is considered to be the most sensitive political act in a republican system of government, it is considered best that the people's representatives be made by the representatives of the people to be legislators.

Unlike the law-making power whose exercise is governed by numerous restrictions, the exercise of Congress' canvassing responsibility is left to the sound judgment of the senators and congressmen.

The Constitution simply states that the Senate president shall, upon receipt of the certificates of canvass, and not later than 30 days after the election, open all those certificates in the presence of the members of the two chambers of Congress.

COMMENTARY

Raul J. Pangalangan

Once the certificates pass the scrutiny of technical correctness and completeness, the Senate has no discretion to refuse to proclaim the winners.

In what may be considered an expression of limited self-confidence in the ability of the senators and congressmen to responsibly undertake this task, the Constitution states that "Congress shall promulgate its rules for the canvassing of the certificates."

Blanket authority has been given to Congress in deciding how it wants to go about canvassing the certificates. The framers of the Constitution probably felt that only Congress (and no other government office) is in the best position to determine, depending on the needs of the times, what process to use to determine the duly elected president and vice president of the country.

If we follow only the "separation of powers" principle that underlies the relationship among the three branches of government—executive, legislative and judicial—it is doubtful if the Supreme Court can infer regulations of operation governing the constitutionality of whatever scheme Congress may decide to adopt in the canvass of certificates.

The matter of laying down the rules to govern the performance of a function that the Constitution has specifically assigned to Congress is a "political question," or something that is left to the sound judgment of the branch of government whose members were directly elected by the people.

While it is true that the highest tribunal is the final arbiter of legal controversies, it cannot and should not interfere in the area of the prerogative of legislature that by constitutional fiat, left within the latter's exclusive prerogatives.

Whatever may be the rationale behind the Constitution giving Congress full power and authority to promulgate its rules for the canvassing of certificates, it is clear that it is Congress and Congress alone that has the power to promulgate the rules that will govern the canvassing.

Whether the said canvassing of the certificates shall be done through a joint canvassing committee or by all the senators and congressmen is up to the two chambers of Congress to decide.

It is unfortunate that on such an important matter as the formation and House of Representatives have not come to the agreement on a set of rules and procedures to follow, to the extent that it produces hesitancy in the Commission on Appointments which consist of members from both chambers.

In the absence of a governing law on the canvassing of certificates, there is an excuse but as in all luck on matters for guidance. So, reference has to be made with the rules adopted in the last two presidential elections. But the problem with relying on tradition is it is based on the circumstances prevailing when the rules was adopted, and there is no guarantee that it made to apply in future occasions.

As the end of day Congress, not the judiciary or any other branch of government, has the burden of resolving the issue of who is shall live up to its responsibility of proclaiming the duly elected president and vice president.

It only be the Congress, the senators and congressmen must check their political ambitions at the door when they enter the session hall and let the greater interests of the country guide them on this extraordinary issue presented before them.

Father's in Grade 4

PHILLY is 11 and he is extremely bitter a cell phone dealer to earn P300 a day so he can have pocket money when he goes back to school in June. This is a bit unfair, especially as some of the money goes to apartment and if he runs into his friends, a night out can mean seeing him back to, to night out loud, "zero balance."

Last year he had to drop out and he's not one to mention

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

this in front of his friends. If he had stayed in school, he would be in Grade 4 and he would have been in the same class as his younger brother Willy who is only 9 and who is now in Grade 3.

Philly's father is a construction worker who is often out of work. Philly has been working since he was 9 years old, helping his father in construction sites. He was also a scavenger, picking up bottles, cans and cardboard boxes to sell to junk shops. He was also a vendor, selling balut, peanuts and other delicacies to passengers in jeepneys and buses.

Philly's mother is a laundrywoman who washes clothes for a number of households in their neighborhood. She is also a vendor, selling cooked food in the streets.

So, at age 8, he started Grade One again. One day he came home with a report card. Philly had failed in all subjects except Physical Education. He was not interested in school. He was more interested in playing with his friends. He was also interested in girls. He had a girlfriend in Grade One.

Philly's parents were disappointed with his performance in school. They were also disappointed with his teacher. They felt that the teacher was not doing her job. They felt that she was not teaching the children well. They felt that she was not giving enough attention to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough homework to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough tests to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough grades to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough feedback to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough encouragement to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough support to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough guidance to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough motivation to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough inspiration to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough hope to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough love to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough care to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough attention to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough time to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough effort to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough energy to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough passion to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough commitment to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough dedication to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough devotion to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough loyalty to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough faithfulness to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough trustworthiness to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough reliability to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough consistency to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough stability to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough security to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough safety to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough protection to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough shelter to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough food to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough water to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough air to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough life to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough death to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough nothing to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough everything to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough anything to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough something to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough. They felt that she was not giving. They felt that she was not. They felt that she. They felt. They. They.

Philly's parents were disappointed with his performance in school. They were also disappointed with his teacher. They felt that the teacher was not doing her job. They felt that she was not teaching the children well. They felt that she was not giving enough attention to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough homework to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough tests to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough grades to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough feedback to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough encouragement to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough support to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough guidance to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough motivation to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough inspiration to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough hope to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough love to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough care to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough attention to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough time to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough effort to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough energy to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough passion to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough commitment to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough dedication to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough devotion to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough loyalty to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough faithfulness to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough trustworthiness to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough reliability to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough consistency to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough stability to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough security to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough safety to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough protection to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough shelter to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough food to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough water to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough air to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough life to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough death to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough nothing to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough everything to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough anything to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough something to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough to the children. They felt that she was not giving enough. They felt that she was not giving. They felt that she was not. They felt that she. They felt. They. They.

On the road to Niagara

AT LARGE

Nona Jimenez-David

MONTREAL—Much of the past few days I have been spent on the road, travelling from Ville Marie to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls, then on to Ottawa and from there to Montreal. And, as ends all my other times I've done road trips in North America, this trip once again convinced me: the vastness and natural bounty of this land.

It's said that the literal meaning of the Ojibwa (Algonquin) for America is "beautiful land." The Ojibwa were right on it right. This is a beautiful country, a beautiful huge country, and there's nothing like experiencing it from the supposedly cramped vantage of a car.

Most times during such long drives, I couldn't help but reflect on how the first white settlers must have had to drive and travel in these terrains to reach their destinations, not to mention covering the Native territories for the way they lived off the land, and the hunters they left behind them.

But I also saw the cars with which Americans and Canadians both drive the environment, the pride they take in it, and the way they try so to balance the enjoyment for the senses to put the brakes on their economy as it were.

Throughout the 13-hour drive from Niagara to Niagara, there are seven hours in Montreal, I marveled at the way the land changed, from the early-one wildflowers, and only when we neared towns or cities. The rest of the way the views were an open river of trees, mountains, hills and fields and the occasional farm house and barn. There were plants of sign, of course, but mainly nature, and the occasional directional signs and billboards. There are none of the huge, distracting billboards that make loop-de-loops driving in the Philippines as smog and overpowering, obscuring the facade towns and giant landscape.

I KNOW it's a dicey topic of mention in interview, but I really must tell you about Niagara Falls, in all the times I've visited this part of the world, I had never seen this natural wonder, and I can just kick myself for not making the effort before.

My driver once the scene of Niagara, across the Rainbow Bridge from Buffalo in New York, near midnight. I caught only a faint impression of a small town of small buildings, not much directly across an arcade of tacky-looking tourist souvenir shops and fast-food outlets. I thought we'd have to drive some distance to get to the falls, but found that it was right there at the end of the main road, visible from a park overlooking the water, and lifting the twilight morning air with mist.

It really does take one's breath away. True there is the American falls, but it isn't as impressive," said my sister Dionie, who'd "done" Niagara so many times before so as to be judged by the night. I was pretty impressed already, as told this truth, but of course, the smaller falls couldn't be seen for the huge mist that was rising, it was somewhere else I pulled in comparison to the "Horseshoe" Falls on the Canadian side, an arc of booming water so powerful it's personally enmeshed by a curtain of mist.

* * *

THERE, one's first glimpse of the Niagara Falls, aptly named by Indian dominions, as the brochures point, the "thunder of waters," continues over the hundred degree that "there's a God."

It was Red Mandarin, a Toronto resident and cousin of my sister's sister-in-law Annie Cruz (who lives in Montreal) and her family, a Canadian couple who is of course (the Niagara "veterans," who pulled me to the east side of the viewing deck to get a glimpse of the rushing waters before we left for the city's cuisine. The waters looked quite fearsome of the depth and volume) and cold, and the roaring waters really did sound like unending thunder.

Then from four of the five Great Lakes waters at Niagara Falls, what then dramatic it does the straight Niagara River into St. Lawrence River and on to the Atlantic Ocean, less than 10 percent of the water falls through the "Niagara on" Falls, but is demonstrated in the Great Blackout of recent memory (Niagara provides hydroelectric power for a good part of the state of New York and the province of Ontario, as you know, from News Broker Dionne).

One can feel the power of the Falls when one takes the "boat" behind the falls, where, protected by a flimsy bright yellow plastic hooded cape, one gets down into the trench behind the falls, jumping and on the rocks, and continues to be drizzly spray of the waters as they come thundering down into the gorge.

I wanted to take it as well a ride in the "Maid of the Mist," a boat tour that circumvents the gorge and goes behind the curtain of water as well, but when my companions backed out, I reluctantly resigned myself to forgoing that adventure.

* * *

THAT evening, our group had dinner in that revolving restaurant atop the Skylon Tower that provides diners with an ever-changing view of the skyline, enough of course the only view that mattered was that of the falls.

Call it overdelight, but just about table seemed into position for a view of the falls, the five-world display from "the worst one table nearest" for about 15 minutes, taken up by the evening of the colorful lit falls and the fancy lights against the dark sky. We couldn't have found a better way to bid Niagara Falls farewell.

Until the late 1800s, the land on which Table Rock, the area just in front of the falls, was in private hands. To maximize the income from the increasingly busy, the landowner built a path for tourists to get closer to the falls, but people who wanted to take a look in Niagara. When the Niagara Park Authority was created, the first thing they did was to buy the property and open the view to the public.

Such a unselfless right indeed belongs to all humanity, proof that even to this jaded world, there are still those who are to behold and make behave of all of us.

Beginning of a sad story

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

IT has been ages since the schools passed any legislative or against the views expressed in any column. Despite this, as the school year opens this morning the column appears, I have waited to wonder whether I actually want for someone that does not excite at least does not excite anybody.

But to Bobby writes to excite me has a solution. "Opinion's first voice is [illegible]." (PDI, 5/23/04), stating that contrary to Quezon's claim in his memoirs, a comic (6, 1967) dating who had been convicted for a misdemeanor lived in the slums; there, Bobby, there were other people convicted for much petty crimes (Quezon's words). This words would be quoted here. I shouldn't have taken Quezon's words at face value for memory does have its own fictions or is from there an lapse of memory.

The most interesting letter, however, also appeared yesterday from Jose Ignacio Lapuz who commented on my column "Terror and abuse in war" (PDI, 5/14/04). There is something about the death of the Bonifacio brothers in the Biyak-na-bato range that really lights the terror fires. Mr. Lapuz's letter is there before it that I believe readers of the column will be interested in reading it in full:

Dear Sir:

Ambeth Ocampo's column on Gen. Antonio Luna's assassination (May 14) is a very interesting piece of historical research. I am sure many Filipinos will be interested to learn more about the circumstances surrounding the death of Gen. Luna.

Another historical event that I would like to know more about is the death of the Bonifacio brothers. Ambeth, can you write a column about this? Thank you very much in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Jose Ignacio Lapuz

Jose Ignacio Lapuz is a well-known historian and author of many books on Philippine history. He is also a member of the Philippine Historical Association and the Philippine Historical Society. He is a graduate of the University of the Philippines and has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago. He is a professor emeritus at the University of the Philippines and has taught at many universities in the United States and Europe. He is a recipient of many awards and honors, including the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, conferred by the Emperor of Japan in 1964. He is also a recipient of the Philippine Legion of Honor, conferred by the President of the Philippines in 1964. He is a member of the Philippine Historical Association and the Philippine Historical Society. He is a graduate of the University of the Philippines and has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago. He is a professor emeritus at the University of the Philippines and has taught at many universities in the United States and Europe. He is a recipient of many awards and honors, including the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, conferred by the Emperor of Japan in 1964. He is also a recipient of the Philippine Legion of Honor, conferred by the President of the Philippines in 1964. He is a member of the Philippine Historical Association and the Philippine Historical Society.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
"The National Association of Philippine Newspapers"

Honor in defeat

LETTERS

to military men, we were taught, tutored and installed the soldiers' qualities of fighting gallantly and courageously even against overwhelming odds, to the extent of making the supreme sacrifice.

After fighting valiantly and bravely against a much more powerful enemy...superior in numbers, in weaponry and in strategy and tactics, with no victory in sight, facing certain death and destruction...accepting defeat is not dishonorable.

During the Filipino-American War at the turn of the 20th century, Filipino generals outmaneuvered by the powerful American forces, the elite are now enshrined in the pantheons of heroes. American and Filipino soldiers in Nuclei Star II, after savagely fighting for four months beyond the limits of human endurance, give up in Banaba and Guangalan and have since been acclaimed as heroes and honored to the utmost satisfaction of the Asero ng Espinosa.

Why and do not comers have something in common—heavy, although the ends and means are different: the victory is for the...execution of the nation's will and capacity to fight, and the latter is win the votes.

In an election, the party with the resources in men, material and money, superior organization, better campaign strategy and operations and most importantly political acumen, has a powerful, edge. But a candidate to go himself against that party's or admirable, without and accept defeat gallantly on the pedestal of honor.

The American and Filipino commanders in Bataan and Corregidor never said they were cheated by the Japanese.

—MANUEL P. DIAZ, JR.
Brigadier general (ret.),
Armed Forces of the Philippines
Milkman, Quezon City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and views by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 12th to Block Avenue, corner Bago and Mindanao Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to No. 897-4782, 897-4796, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number in e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Human life more than politics

REBELLED to your "hell pay" editorial (PDI, 5/20/04), the Philippine National Police spent 120 policemen and the organization that the national human values talk to passing the highest value on human life "Di love or die PNP do so. And set latter every Filipino does.

We accept as well your assertion that no election is so important, no government position is so precious that it can justify the extinction of one human life. It is indeed sickening to note that some politicians and their followers would kill for as few as positions as the two mentioned.

But the sad and painful reality is that unless all our politicians refuse the sanctity of human life some risk of massacre. However, real political considerations, we are afraid that we will continue to see acts of violence and killings in our elections.

The PNP can subject some suspects gave our best to safeguard the polls, even providing necessary complements to certain candidates. However, we must admit our inability to protect each and every one of the more than 35,000 candidates contesting the various elective positions in today, not to mention the several hundred thousands more of their leaders and followers. Apart from the presidency, the vice-presidency and the 12 senatorial posts at stake, the past election saw this much number of candidates fighting for 17,700 positions in the provincial, city and municipal levels, with some 2,0,000 polling precincts and 40.6 million or so registered voters.

Your editorial said that "For us elections to be 'good, peaceful'—even 'generally peaceful'—are not the denial to expanded or sacrificed." That is the ideal situation of course, and how we wish deep in our hearts that the ideal could be our reality.

But it would be foolish and shortsighted to say that this a crushing for the enemy. Can our politicians, and can we, as a people, be capable of holding the presidency this very precious, yet really peaceful" can be translated to mean that our country will not be the lowest it might become.

On this, the PNP would dearly wish to be proven wrong.

—ROLLY SORTIJO,
police chief superintendent,
chief, Public Information Office,
Philippine National Police,
Camp Crame, Quezon City

Cheating the people

THOSE who cheered and wildred first Inquirer Financial of his votes on terms of forum and should awaken Judas by hanging themselves. Financial is a great, incomparable organization. Me one among his peers like the mindless and deafeaten that nodded him to notice and pass on to book keepkeeper.

He could be the greatest president of our country if only we, the people, support him financially because the poor can live on millions till his golden end life is measured. He is very brave, he is industrious that even people only help those who are already rich, even if their wealth has been acquired through graft and corruption.

The customers and masterminds of the dagdag-bawas in Basilan, Pampanga and elsewhere should languish in jail. They do not deserve any forgiveness for they have shamed the masses.

—EDGARDO ARELLANO,
DMA, Area B Blvd., Barangay Mangahan,
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan 5300

Split-level standards

ON THE SUNDAY of Eliseo Rhesopoulos's love life, on which Belinda Olivares-Cazenave dished me last May 16 by mentioning in her Inday column of May 14, that is not the 40th AM of Quezon-ites are what society looked the other way. Still, the PH took interest when JPE shared Judith Campbell with a local cook possible Cabinet consideration. The public interest really here was that President Lopez Cojuangco Rizzuto Cruz and Ambassador Jesse Marcelo would not investigate former Justice Secretary Hilario Davide Jr. for asking Ichi Sanchez Gibbs would not want a lover to honeymoon period. That was the legitimate concern of what I know. It was not plain voyeurism.

The real obsession is to nothing being done to the charge of Willie Villarosa and Mark Jimenez, validated by the established honorable Sandiganbayan of $2 million to Pryce's senior son long after Edsa 2. The Hong Kong Caribbean trail was identified. The law which President Erap had shared the infamous spoons what he/she says Cabinet had not decided who supposed to have been shared by Jimenez ($17 million); the first couple ($4 million) and our Eulogio ($1 million). The real winners, Bishop Business Club, the Church, the media, etc., would not touch the "Four Gods" from Forbes. The people have no right to know.

Was Binanay fair apparently not punished? Pres. Roxanne, the business or the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism should not issue itself to PDI and Ruby dinner, and Pope and his cousin Jesse M. and his lovely sister in their time, we need a new Tiboog Mijares whose "Crimsat Chronicles" detailed the stories many Presidents Ramos complain to him or to different boss money—if one high official is receiving he is unimportant or to his bosses.

Why should a woman be raised when she happens to be chief executive and commander in chief? There are public lawyers implementing the Edsa and Ramos people's revolution, we name richer validate or speak the people. We need the best investigative reporters assigned to the task, for the sake of saving the face for public office. We cannot have alpha-level standards.

—RENE SOUTHEY,
8181 Brgy. ancik.,
Poblacion, Makati City

The evils that all men do

BOOKCTION is the point made by Lena Dow. ("The Beheading," PDI, 5/20/04). I think she means the point raised by Shena Ezel. The al-Qaida terrorists are a unique branch of mindless killing robots who do not care what people think or claim. They act as inside users in any vested interest or advocacy group in the planet. The only one they pretend the Pledge loyalty to is to allow the Islamic fundamentalists to establish an all-powerful, designed for maximum effect, terror-mind if the victims had nothing to do with their governments decisions. So, for the media to ignore their dependence is while preaching on the "freedom of the press" is to allow the terrorists their message amended or unintended, also due al-Qaida is winning the propaganda war in this point.

Sometimes, silence means approval. Let's see all people in the world demand the destruction of the terrorists in Iraq. With this victory in their hats, who will be their next target? Should they decide to set their sights on Muslims by exploding bombs in Other Islands and that forces terrorists from the Republic of the Philippines, what is Imus prepared to do? I am not asking for us to close our eyes or to shut down our doors. I only request everyone in the media to be equally courageous media or to shut down do.

—LINO DAGPIN II,
linopin@inquirer.net

SPORTS

Toyota Otis gains semis

Daa charities destroy Montaña

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DENNIS Daa cleaned two fine throws with 2.6 seconds left as Toyota Otis-Letran escaped with a 73-70 victory over Mercantile Powerhorses and zoomed into the semifinals of the PBL Unity Cup at the Pasig Sports Center yesterday.

Added to suspension by Al Magpiong, Daa evidently took the shoulders to shock the Jewels and help his team join early qualifiers Vito Mineral Water-PEU (9-1), Pasig-Sun Valley (8-2) and defending champion Shapes Toothpaste (9-0) in the next round.

Montaña held onto the win[illegible] beating in the fourth period in the face of the relentless Toyota Otis offensive buck-stopped by Ryan Bautista.

Harper Verdeflor's triple pushed the Knights to a 62-58 lead, but Frederic Pagulayan kept the Jewels within striking distance with clutch shots of his own.

That set the stage for a dramatic finish as both teams traded leads until Aaron Aban tipped in an Emile Jean for a 71-70 Toyota Otis lead. Magpiong then answered to prompt an[illegible] foul in the ensuing play.

The score:

LETRAN-OTIS 20—Verde 17, Jean 16, Dee 15, Bautista 11, Aban 6, Adriano 4, Fortugazi 4, Arriola 2, Cruz 2, Mendiola 2, Flores 2, Garcia 0

MERCANTILE 18—Salvador 14, Sagucio 12, Vergara 10, Bayrante 8, Magpiong 7, Sampol 7, Guerrero 4, Sabino 2, Estrada 2, Cuarba 2, Jones 0.

Quarters: 15-22, 31-38, 47-50, 73-70.

DENNIS Daa backs up to try a shot off Aiden Espiritu of Montaña in the pivotal fourth quarter AUGUST DELA CRUZ

'CRAZY' GAME FALLOUT

Guiao, Gregorio, 3 refs penalized

GLORIA TODAY | Quezon Coliseum
4:00 p.m. — Cona Jones vs. Sanchi Jose
7 p.m. — Phi Lumina vs. Bread

By Jun Mascuria

RED Bull coach Yeng Guiao, Pinstreak umpire Ryan Gregorio and three game officials were slapped with fines and suspensions by the Philippine Basketball Association Commissioner's Office in the aftermath of the controversial triple-overtime encounter last Saturday.

Guiao and Gregorio were fined "between P15,000 and P30,000," PBA sources revealed, for postgame remarks that were deemed "detrimental to the league."

Referees Dipi Rufino, Renato Salazar and Joel Nicolas were suspended for two playdates and their paychecks waived for their performance in the game that saw 117 fouls thrown awarded to the teams.

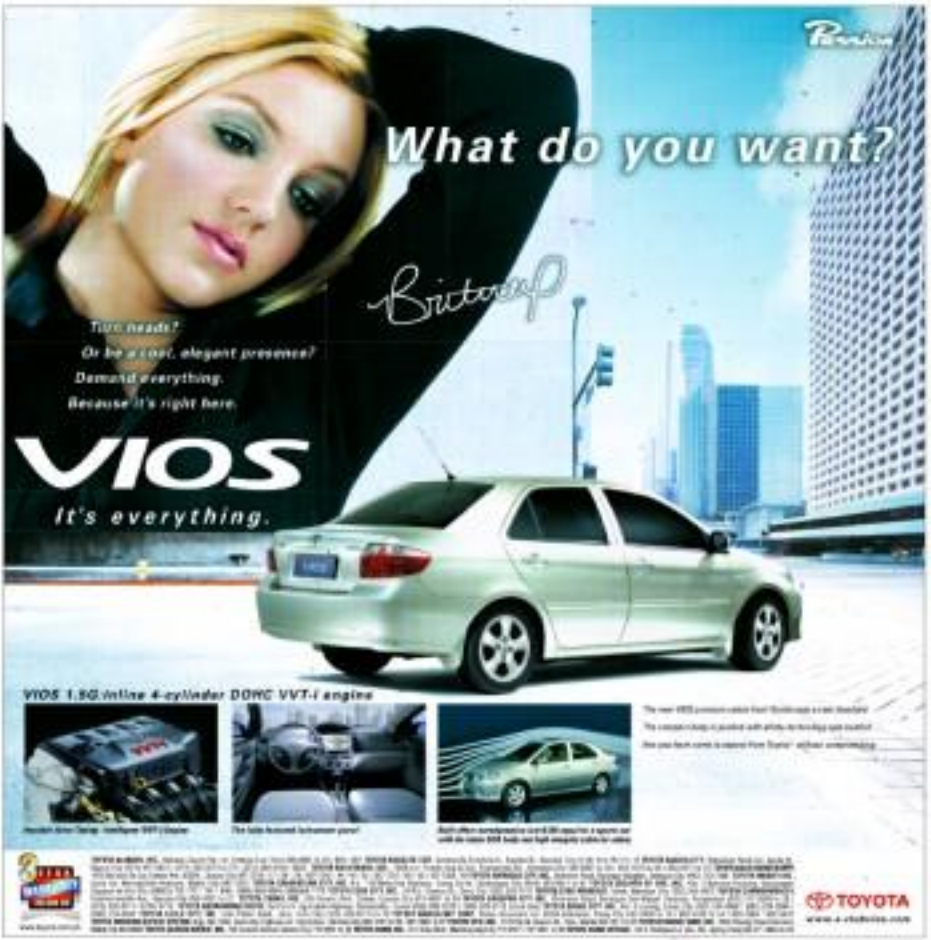
Commissioner Noli Eala reviewed the tapes of the post-game interview and justified the penalty by citing the responsibility of both coaches as their teams exit the league.

"They were fined for making public statements detrimental to the league," Eala said. "Their criticisms are unfair and unnecessary."

Guiao described Red Bull's 114-106 triple-overtime victory over Purefoods as "crazy" and "absurd," while sympathy bounded the officiating as the fourteen he had ever seen.

"The performances of the refs was very below league standards. Some of the guidelines were not followed very well," admitted Eala.

The referees first joined gains of Randy Boy Cruz, Joey Lobaugapado and Marcelito Quiñonero in the suspension list, reducing the PBA pool attributes to Al Cone, Calungsod-pado and Quiñonero were sanctioned for their performances in the tiebreaker[illegible] much last week.



E-mail: ar_pacorral_news@inquirer.com.ph

Across the **NATION**

Assistant Editor Tony Binayoyo

No power crisis, Mindanaoans told

ILIGAN CITY—National Transmission Corp. (Transco) officials yesterday said Mindanao is not facing a power crisis, amid sporadic brownouts all over the region.

Dr. Diosdado Mascariñas, vice president of Transco's Mindanao Generation Jihilline), said the island is currently facing a power deficit caused by the shutdown of one of its hydroelectric power plants.

In Dipolog, residents complain of 14-hour brownouts as power outages also occur in the cities of Iligan, Zamboanga, General Santos and Cotabato, Zamboanga Peninsula and in the Caraga region.

The power interruption would last for some time until Transco shall have repaired major generating components of the Agus 6 power plant in Pala-o, Lanao del Norte, Mascariñas added.

Officials said Agus 6 was shut down for a 46-day maintenance schedule which started on May 17. The repair work reduced the 700 MW capacity of the Agus grid by 133 megawatts.

Power Barge 115 in Maco, Davao del Sur, was also shut down, leading to the insufficient supply of power in the Mindanao grid.

Mascariñas appealed to everyone, especially to the electric utility firms and cooperatives, "to directly adhere to their contractual demand."

"Doing so would avoid total meltdown," he told reporters in a press conference yesterday. "But if there will be more shut downs, we will be constrained to institute brownouts in series of hours only so that no one is left out," he added.

According to engineer Arlene Mosqueda, head of Transco's rider department, distribution utilities and power traders in Mindanao as a whole have exceeded 95 percent of their contracted demand.

As a result, Transco had to schedule brownouts all over Mindanao to distribute the reserve demand during peak hours. This explains the sporadic power interruptions occurring in the island.

In Davao City, the Davao Light and Power Co. has been using its Bajada Power Plant for 12 straight hours to augment the power supply.

Transco's meeting with the executives of utility firms and power distributors on Wednesday is aimed to finetune the importance of limiting their consumption to their contract, it is learned. (Also see below and)

Engineer Lovinair Adora, assistant vice president of Transco, also called on the Mindanao people to "help conserve."

"Avoid non-distinct during peak hours, give your fridge a rest, switch off lights when not in use, and [use] all unnecessary during daytime," he said, adding that these measures could help reduce the two megawatts demand for electricity. *Jeffrey Mananga, PIO Mindanao Bureau*

BALANCING ACT
An elderly person casts a ballot in Iligan City yesterday during the opening of voting precincts in Lanao del Norte on election day.

Priest who won mayoral race turns to high court

BACOLOD CITY—Claiming that the votes he got were "votes of mercy and for penance," the convicted Roman Catholic priest who won as mayor of Bugasan, Benguet, has asked the Supreme Court to respect the people's will and allow him to assume office.

In a 43-page petition filed Tuesday, Fr. Narciso Cayat, who is incarcerated for an acts of lasciv- camorra case, told the SC that the residents of Bugasan, despite knowing his "immoral shortcoming," have welcomed him back as a public servant.

Cayat, 45, said his mandate for public office "should go beyond its own legal considerations," referring to his disqualification by the Commission on Elections to run for mayor.

Lawyer Benedict Bato, Cayat's counsel, signed in the petition filed by registered mail here that the priest has been vilified enough during the campaign period for the votes he got "revenue/hate to his lost dignity."

Cayat of the Binoculan People's Coalition defeated his lone rival Vice Mayor Thomas Bellang in Cañao (BB) on May 10.

Cayat was proclaimed winner cobbler 11 despite being disqualified by the Comelec for failure to make to his certificate of candidacy that he is not protestor.

But Pulilengh lawyer is ready to oppose the petition.

"The law is very clear. A person convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude cannot hold public office," said lawyer Enrique Pelaina.

"One who is disqualified cannot and should not be voted upon," he said.

In his petition, Cayat cited Bato concern why he should not be disqualified. There was the commission's failure to act on his motion to reconsider his disqualification for the mere failure to pay the P500 filing fee, the taxpayer service of summons for him to answer the disqualification charge. And the petition to cancel his certificate of candidacy was filed beyond deadline.

Cayat asked the court to issue a writ of injunction to the Comelec not to make its decision to disqualify him "final and executory."

In his petition, Cayat also asked the SC to look deeper into the implications of the votes that made him win, stating the people have accepted him as their mayor despite his conviction.

"He became the object of a hate campaign staged by groups out to exploit his conviction," the petition said.

"But he kept quiet. He just went to the reps of his people who shed tears for him whenever he sang the song he composed contrasting himself to their forgiving hands," it added. *Dolmar Cardeño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Negros gov opens self to peace talks with rebs

DUMAGUETE CITY—Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz has expressed willingness to talk peace to the New People's Army (NPA) if the communist rebels are interested.

"My arms are open for any peace talks with the NPA," he told reporters here yesterday, saying his communications lines are open to the rebels provided they come negotiable.

There is one small problem though. Nobody knows where and how to start.

Arnaiz suggested that the media initiate the move to establish a line of communication between the governor and the communist rebels.

If he had talked to the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) leader, he added, there was no reason that he would not do the same to other groups like the NPA.

The RPA-ABB and Arnaiz had conducted informal talks in the late 1990s, before the national government and the breakaway movement signed a peace agreement in December 2006.

Because of those talks with the RPA-ABB, the provincial government did not have difficulty implementing projects in areas considered as strongholds of the breakaway movement.

One of those was the homestead village of Sitio Avocado in Sta. Catalina town where projects had been implemented, including the building of the barrio.

Arnaiz said the provincial government was willing to listen to the NPA and may positively respond to any reasonable demand.

But, the governor said the RPA-ABB should not aim beyond the local officials if some of their demands would not be met. *Benny Benavidez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

PNB officials deny giving info on terror suspect

CITY—The city's branch management of the Philippine National Bank (PNB) has clarified that the bank has not supplied authorities with information that led to the recent two-month arrest of a suspected money handler for Southeast Asian terrorist kidnaps.

Ibrahim Taki, the city's PNB branch manager, stated that (l)egedly bank accounts details without court order violates Republic Act 1405, the Banking Secrecy Law.

Taki was reacting to an inquiry report last month, citing him and an undisclosed PNB employee in the activities of secret banking information that would put Jordan Abdullah, one of the bank's clients, on charges of terrorism and having links with the (t)hong(k)ong money laundering.

Media

He said he only learned of Abdullah's arrest through the media, and that his deposits with drawal passbook may have disclosed to authorities who detained him his banking transactions with PNB.

Abdullah, who was into the money changing business, was earlier reportedly searched by masked men at a coffee shop opposite the PNB Building two months ago along Rajah Sikatuna Street here.

Later, authorities brought him before the public, charging him with having links to the (l).

Court order

Lawyers said uncovering the questioned bank account required a court order if charges of money laundering was filed against the suspect under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA).

Bank personnel said Abdullah was a familiar client who had been banking with the PNB since 1998. They said Taki's designation as acting branch manager was effective only in April 2000.

The administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo has joined an international anti-terror alliance led by the United States which sought to clamp down on the terrorist network. —Roch Manalosa, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

2 bikers die in mishap

LUCENA CITY—Two motorbike riders were killed in a road accident last midnight on Sunday. A police report said the riders were traveling (a) distance (o) Tayabas municipal (e) heading toward the city proper when the motorcycle skidded in a sharp curve along Lucena-Tayabas (e), Barangay Bagong Silang while approaching. Dead on the spot (a)re(a) the bike. Investigation (e) is the middle-aged male. A speeding motorist from the opposite direction ran over the victims, causing their immediate deaths. The driver of the (ja)y, aside from the numbers 09 (o) no (e) plate, but the (m)ony was brought to the district (o)ffice (e) by the (ci)y. —Edith Mallar Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

300 families displaced

DUMAGUETE CITY— Over 300 families were left homeless when a fire hit the fishing village of Tabuk (Sta) in (D)umaguete City late (W)ednesday afternoon. Nine persons were injured when the hanging bridge connecting the village to the city proper collapsed (o) down (t) supporting structures were eaten by flames. Bureau investigators said the fire was caused by an electrical short circuit in a house believed to be operating a kind of video (k)e-no gambling machines. Most of the houses were made up of light materials, which caused the fire to spread rapidly. The fire victims were temporarily sheltered in the area by (h)ose of evacuation schools. Members of the Dumaguete City Bureau (o) gave 50 sacks of rice and some 1,000 packs of noodles to the displaced villagers on Thursday. —Ryan Rosales, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ex-vice mayor slain

MACONOY, Bukidnon—The former vice mayor of Catarman town was gunned down by three men in front of his house in Barangay Sto. Santo on Saturday morning. Police said Arthur Garma, 54, who was the vice mayor of Catarman from 1998 to 2001, died instantly from at least eight bullet wounds in the head and in different parts of the body. Reports said Garma was about to enter his house at about 6:30 a.m. when the suspects, armed (a) motorcycle, arrived and shot him. Garma had just finished his morning exercise when he was attacked, police said. Chief Insp. Florentino Mitoring, Maconoy police chief, said the suspects used a .45 cal. pistol and a .38 cal. revolver in the attack. —Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Cop killed in ambush

CAMP (i) MAJ. Pampanga—A policeman was killed while another was wounded after they were ambushed by five suspected New People's Army rebels on midnight Friday in (a)kon (P)rovince. Senior Insp. Rolando Mendoza, provincial police director, identified the slain policeman as SPO2 Virgilio Mesa of the provincial intelligence office. Mendoza said the (v)o's (ta)s occupation at the time of the attack. SPO1 Rolando (P)ulido was wounded when they were attacked by the rebels in Barangay Platan, Porac. Through recorded (-)block automatic (o) recoilless (r)ifles, they then (ra) (b)ound (a) (t)he (v)ehicle. Police said the rebels were armed with a 40 cal. gun, an M-16 rifle and a shotgun. —Sandra Dapia, PDI Central Luzon Desk

NPA burns tractors

TARLAC (Tarlac) CITY—Suspected communist rebels burned three farm trucks (be)s owned by a cop as well as Plan Cagayan on Thursday. Police said the tractor drivers of the Cagayan Regional Sugar Milling Corp. were on their way home from the (s)ugarcane fields when the rebels stopped them at Barangay Mallama, Pluli. The rebels, according to the police, asked the tractor drivers if their companies had hired (a)ny (a)nti-(c)ommunist (v)igilante (o)r (a)nti-(i)nsurgency (g)roup. The rebels burned the tractors worth about P8 million.

Extremista Cabiles, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Pope's rep coming

TARLAC (Tarlac) CITY—The representatives of Pope John Paul II to the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Miraculous Image of the Sto Lady of Out of Cagayan will arrive here in the first week of June to officiate the golden jubilee of the canonical coronation of the image. Francisco Cardinal Mendoza, the Pope's representative, will be accompanied by Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco and the president of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church. The image of the Sto Lady of Out was crowned here on June 30, 1954 by Monsignor Ronan Cyrille Hayes (i).

Extremista Cabiles, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Cavite warehouse raided by cops

THE INTELLECTUAL Property Law does not cover music and video tapes and computer disk (d)rives.

It encompasses all patented products that may be copied under pain of prosecution for criminal and civil offenses.

David Ong of Deighlicated Building Systems Inc. found this out the hard way when police operatives raided his plant in (t)own. It is Cavite and head of his in Greenhills, San Juan on the strength of court (o)rder for alleged violation of Republic Act 8293 or otherwise Known as the Intellectual Property Law.

Ong, Emilia Mercado, head of the raiding team from the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Camp Crame, said in a report that police were able to seize unlicensed fake consumer products and several pieces of documentary evidence from the two raids.

Armed with search warrants issued by the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 21 in Imus, Cavite and Branch 147 in Pasig City the operatives swooped down last May 24 to the Deighlicated Building Systems plant located at the New Cavite Industrial City here and its main office on Annapolis Street in Greenhills.

Confiscated during the raids were machines, suspected construction roofing and decking materials and documents pertaining to the company's (a)lleged illegal operations, according to Mercado in a statement.

Among those arrested were metal fabricating welders, roofing sheet cutters, material panel and roofing and decking (s)heets carrying the brand names Steeldek, Decotile and Metaldeck 3.

Taken from the Deighlicated offices in Greenhills were sales contracts, delivery receipts, sales invoices and other documentary evidences.

Mercado requested that the court orders were properly implemented in the presence of Duley (a)ttorney and (i)nvestigator

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Exhibit shows 'skin' of church

By Frank Cimatu
Vigan City, Ilocos Sur

A RECENT exhibit at the St. Paul Metropolitan Church's Museo de San Pablo sparked a question on the preservation of Vigan City's Heritage Village. Should the "skin" of old churches be used for the remodelling of the 19th century walls of old houses in Vigan?

"Palimdo" is the term used for the limewash applied on walls of old Philippine churches. Back when there was no cement, egg or beer was mixed with sand (as much fine as possible) to form a binding mixture in a process called apuntasi.

The young exhibit, "Palimdo: The Skin of the Church," by the Ayala Museum Foundation, with the help of Fundacion Santiago, Tomas y Unson Foundation and Grupo Serido, brings to focus the old masonic art.

To make the palimdo more durable, egg white, molasses and plants were added to the apuntasi. Plants included the *yuto* piece or bulbilling (*Lasia pinnatisa*), its leaves chopped and cooked in water before they are added to the mixture to make the palimdo waterproof. The excessive use of egg white and egg shells made it necessary to scrub the wall so well, that is why are still have egg-based desserts like *pan de Morelos, yema, tocino del cielo* and *helado*.

In areas without lime, churches are made of *piedra bolaya* (literally, stone in battalion) produced from gravel, coral and stone. The San Agustin Church in Intramuros, Manila, is made of adobe. Other churches are made of adobe, volcanic stone and coral stone or *piedra de Visayas*.

Bricks

Monsignor Thaddeus Mercado of the St. Paul Metropolitan Church said most churches in Ilocos are made of *ladrillos* or bricks.

He said Kiba in Paghumayan village in Vigan used to make these bricks for the churches and houses in Vigan and neighboring towns. Included in the exhibit were *ladrillos* from the churches of Narvacan, Sta. Maria, Santa and San Esteban town.

When there was no more use for *ladrillos*, the kilns were used to churn out jars and fig urines.

The palimdo was applied over the church walls as "the skin of the churches."

Mercado said the traditional palimdo should be reserved for the finishing of the Vigan houses to make them more authentic and, more importantly, to keep the heritage site status of Vigan's Heritage Village.

"Now almost all are ceramic instead. The Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which granted Vigan the status of a heritage site in 1999) is very strict on authenticity. We could be delisted if we don't follow the palimdo on our houses," he said.

Heritage

The houses where Vigan as a heritage site since it represents a unique fusion of Asian building design and construction with European colonial architecture and planning. Vigan, it said, is a exceptionally intact and well-preserved example of a Spanish trading town in East and Southeast Asia.

The Palimdo exhibit, incidentally, included the unsightly utrors made in preserving Philippine churches. These included painted cement to make them look like simulated wood, pink-colored bricks, simulated coral stone over real coral stones, cemented pathways to expose the bricks and laying bricks over stone tiles.

Vigan Mayor Eva Marie Singson Medina said the possibility of a Unesco delisting is the least of their worries.

She said the then National Historical Institute, in its guidelines, gave a formula of lime and cement for the plaster in restoring the walls of the Vigan houses.

"We are abiding by the 1981 guidelines," Medina said.

It was former First Lady Imelda Marcos who ordered the whitewashing of the Vigan houses in the 1970s, giving them a ghostly but uniform charm.

"I still believe that the original Vigan houses were colorful," Medina said.

SAMPLES of the ingredients used in the construction of old churches in the country (top left photo) and the original red tile or bricks from various churches in Ilocos Sur (above) were recently exhibited at the Museo de San Pablo in Vigan City.

PHILIPS
Let's make things better

"You name it, we play it"

Meet the King of DVD. With Philips, you're assured of compatibility* regardless of disc and storage media. It's compatible with today's leading movie, music and picture formats to make your viewing experience more enjoyable. Philips also has the widest range of DVDs - from portable, stand-alone, home theater and mini hi-fi systems. Get the best disc playability only from the market leader*** - Philips.

Staying home has never been better.

Debates delay Congress count

Front page 1

to the Supreme Court. It depends on the outcome of the debate.

"[The] amendments [or bills] may turn through provisions that are not acceptable. We want to see terms that are agreeable to both sides. The ruling majority enjoys numerical superiority, and they could use this."

De Venecia said the debate on which rules should apply in the joint session, including the voting, would continue until 9 p.m. today if the manner was not resolved by 3 last night. He said everyone would be given "the widest latitude to express their opinion."

"We should be able to approve the joint rules that are now proved with the initialed canvass," he said. "The approval should come on or before 9 p.m. [Wednesday] with the House and Senate voting separately."

Negros Castillo earlier disclosed the duties of Sen. Joker Arroyo that allowing the entire Congress to sit in a canvassing board would delay the tabulation of results and prolong the session beyond June 30.

"Lawmakers are guided by reason," she said.

No possibility

Before the start of the session at 2:20 p.m., Drilon said he did not doubt the Supreme Court would stop Congress from its constitutional duty of canvassing the votes should the opposition take its case there.

"I don't see any possibility of the [tribunal] issuing a temporary restraining order, to tell Congress, citing the separation of powers between the legislature and the judiciary.

In a statement, newly pro-claimed Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the opposition had no intention of "unduly delaying the canvassing of the votes in favor or prejudice any person or party."

He said the opposition would do everything to facilitate the canvass. But he cautioned "those who might be tempted to railroad the proceedings for their own personal interests" that it would "never accede to sacrifice truth for speed or whatever reason."

Pimentel reiterated that as the opposition understood the Constitution, the canvass of the votes for the country's top two leaders should be done by Congress "in a whole in joint public session, not by a committee of Congress."

He also said there was nothing in the proposed rules to exempt the congressional representatives of the various parties to the committees.

"If the canvassing is done by Congress as a whole in joint session, as ordained by the Constitution, the problem of who should be members of the committees would be obviated," he said.

Parliamentary inquiries

Opposition congressmen are confident in debating the proposed rules by raising parliamentary inquiries on matters affecting the proposed rules for canvassing.

A total of 211 congressmen presided the quorum for the House.

Surbilon Sen. Jose Virgilio Bautista started the ball rolling when he took the podium to ask whether the constitutional provision to make public all the proceedings of the joint session sitting as the National Board of Canvassers could be observed.

De Venecia said the proceedings would be open but only to all Filipinos but also to the international community.

Magsaysaysay Rep. Dilagen Dilangalen, who ran and lost in the senatorial election, asked what provisions in the House rules would be in effect in canvassing.

House Majority floor Leader Nepomuceno reminded Dilangalen that since it was a joint session of Congress members to canvass the votes, then a parliamentary inquiry as such can not be allowed. Only senators and members of both chambers would determine which provisions should apply depending on the issues to be raised.

But Dilangalen insisted that since the rules of the joint session had yet to be approved, the House should not abandon its rules in the same manner that the Senate should also observe its own rules.

Despite a ruling by De Venecia that Dilangalen's inquiry had been satisfactorily answered, the latter demanded to question the members of the House rules drawn up the proposed joint rules.

According to Dilangalen, it was only when he entered the session hall that he saw a copy of the draft.

He proceeded to read the constitutional provisions on the mandate of the National Board of Canvassers, and was booed by some people in the gallery annoyed by the delay in the adoption of the joint rules.

'Reasonable leeway'

Balmaceda appealed to Congress to give "reasonable leeway" to the opposition but to be mindful of the June 30 deadline for the proclamation of the new president and vice president.

"It is important to balance the imperatives of transparency and expeditiousness, both of which are important to the public interest," said Sen. Teofisto Guingona, spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, said in a statement.

"We are for giving the opposition all reasonable leeway to do its job, but we are also concerned about the effect of a protracted canvass upon our political and economic stability," he said.

Bunye said Malacañang was confident that the legislators would be able to resolve the impasse so who should conduct the canvass.

"We trust how much faith in the process and the forbearance to allow democracy to run its course," he said.

But earlier he said the correct process provided for by law and tradition was canvassing by a joint committee.

Bunye later said in a briefing that the administration doesn't intend the Senate and the House would be able to "control or tamper the activities" of their colleagues.

He expressed the hope that the opposition would not seek a TRO from the Supreme Court.

In an interview with Radyo ng Bayan, Bunye reminded the lawmakers that the nation was watching them.

"It is time for members of Congress to show statesmanship and prove that their goal is to determine the true results of the election and not to grandstand," he said. With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño

THE FLAG and ballots guard the Congress canvassing at the Batasan.

PNP links Gringo to plot but he denies . . .

Front page A1

Philippine National Police Intelligence Director Gen. Delfin Lorenzana yesterday alleged that Honasan and his 4,000-strong Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI) had been going around the country to recruit people for an "Edsa-type" uprising.

The uprising is supposed to start with primary supply in protest against widespread election fraud.

"We have a report saying that he (Honasan) was transferring from one province to another to recruit people to join the rally," Delfin told reporters.

Lorenzana claimed this supposed Honasan inspiration campaign was part of "Oplan Alma Bayan"—alleged to be a plot to prevent the proclamation of Mr Macapagal as the winner of the May 10 presidential elections.

De Venecia informed

"This Delfin is irresponsible," Honasan told the Inquirer.

He said he visited the cities of Zamboanga, Catabato and Davao last Wednesday to monitor the peace talks initiated with the opposition's Rebolusyonary Proletaryado Army (RPA).

Before leaving for Mindanao, Honasan said he left his itinerary with the office of Speaker Jose de Venecia, with whom he had signed a covenant for clean elections.

"I left my itinerary with Mr. Honasan said he met some Davao leaders because he was in the area to monitor the Davao zone election situation.

Honasan said he never influenced Deputies De Venecia, Honasan later said nonsensical.

Hebdene apologies

He said he called PNP chief Hermogenes Hebdene Jr. and asked that Delfin's statements be stopped.

"Mr. Hebdene apologized for this impression that was generated," Honasan said.

Honasan founded the organization together with some and described his actions as "patriotic".

"This has no basis," Honasan told the Inquirer. "I have no links at all to the leaders of certain elements in our country who benefit from confusion."

The former Army colonel added: "I think a responsible statesman, even related to some cases of destabilization, must be tempered by the highest degree of responsibility because it is the Republic that is being drawn around this."

Honasan, in the interview with the Inquirer, said Mr. Macapagal could stabilize the political situation by putting an end to the talks of alleged destabilization.

Honasan warned that if Mr. Macapagal gave credence to the destabilization talk, "I think this further diminishes the prospect of government stability after the elections."

Patriots also linked

Honasan says opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.'s chief security consultant during the election campaign and a member of the Board of Trustees in Poe Junior's Oakwood revamp by elite Army soldiers.

Early this month, he signed a covenant with De Venecia committing to support the unification and development programs of Mr. Macapagal.

Delfin also linked Poe's camp and the pull-out movement of group Honasan, largely composed of church militants, to the purported double election effort.

He branded the Partido as a "front organization" of the Communist Party of the Philippines, allegedly composed of former and active CPP members.

Police spokesman Pl. Jose Bunot, who fought the Marcos dictatorship, flatly denied involvement in any seditious activity.

"We are not part of any destabilization effort," the priest said. (See related story on Page A8.)

Tagle cries harassment

The alleged alliance, Delfin claimed, was made possible by personalities like Susan Tagle, a top aide of Poe and whom Delfin described as a former Communist Party official.

Delfin also mentioned other leftist figures.

"We denounce the PNP for this act of harassment against opposition leaders and members of the campaign organs of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP)," Tagle said, referring to Poe's party.

A leftist opposition report obtained by the Inquirer also identified other leftists and members of at least four groups as being supposed members of the alliance.

A senior PNP official told the Inquirer the CPP had projected for "Edsa Dos/2" at least six months before the elections.

The preparations included the "infiltration" of the opposition to make the alliance very possible, the official said.

Proper sight

The military report said the alleged plot would be initiated by barrios through proper rights and protest actions—disguised as complaints against election fraud—which would culminate in an Edsa uprising.

It has identified some groups involved in the supposed activities," Dobias told reporters.

"We have monitored that they will hold mass actions in Metro Manila and the provinces the moment the President is declared the winner."

Barrios has begun a "People's Watch" vigil at the Batasan, where Congress is canvassing the votes for president and vice president.

Orchestrated by CPP

"All these things happening today are being orchestrated by the CPP," Delfin said, citing intelligence findings.

Dilokan said left-leaning groups and the PMRP had been mobilizing people for "Mass Rights," saying there's a fear of P200 to a high of P600 each.

Dilokan rallies fell on a rainy day, prosecutors would be paid double, Delfin said.

He said the mobilization was "somehow" derailed by local developers to some areas said the same people demanding a month bigger pay for their participation.

Some provincial recruits had demanded a 50-percent down payment, Dilokan said.

Dilokan yesterday formed Task Force Kapayapaan to beef up security around the Batasan, the Philippine International Convention Center, and in areas where mass actions were expected.

Drivers wooed

Awaiting the police allegations are credible, are problems the supposed planners will have to "woo to support their opposition to the rally this.

Ms Macapagal yesterday treated about 100 jeepney and bus operators, drivers and conductors/coach at Malacañang and won their commitment not to hire demonstrators to protest fares. Has evaluated entry on Page A11.

Among the groups represented at the luncheon were Pinaang Manila, Pinalap, MUSDA, Alyadap, PCDG-ACTO, Samahap, ACTO, Sycoda, Edlosa and UPTOP.

A leader of an urban poor group which joined the May 2000 attack on Malacañang, who said the drivers were not fired up enough to launch another uprising.

"The signal will come from the people, and at the moment, we don't see the signal," said Arnold Oblena of the People's Alliance for Truth and Justice (PATJ) and former spokesperson of the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP).

"There is no deliberate attempt to agitate the "mass" and the mass is not yet agitated to launch another Edsa-type of uprising," Oblena said, adding that "the situation is not like Edsa II and Edsa III."

"They are mobilizing, but are we not. We share a common ground—that we despise Ms Macapagal—but there is no united front," Oblena said.

Oblena also said sources were also support Ilon "will not risk their names and careers and their lives for Mr. Estrada." With reports from Carlito Pablo, Ira Pedroche and Marites Papa

Winning Isabela bet brings fight to Metro

Front page A1

the interior of his house.

In bringing his fight to Manila, Padaca told reporters he was "knocking on the heavy" of Comelec officials to convene Sunday and observe the rules of law and calling on the commission to "render justice" to his people, who must not be there now home.

"I have won officially, but I have not been proclaimed," Padaca said during a press conference in Ermiga, Isabela City.

Padaca said the Comelec en banc, by Lizada Bidol said, the "illegal" order could be used against Lucillanes, whose appointment has yet to be confirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

Lucillanes is holding an ad interim appointment, having been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in February while Congress was in recess.

Padaca did not bother to hide his disappointment with the two commissioners.

"They have allowed themselves to be used [by the Gov]," she said.

Great injustice, says Roco

Blaming a robot Talino unit the results "Isabela, Malabon Ho Ho" pinned on it, Padaca broke into tears upon seeing her son Bids, Roco, president of the Aksyon Demokratiko party, under which she ran.

"It's the fight of Grace Padaca and the people of Isabela," Roco declared. "There's a great injustice, and the whole Filipino people should stand to correct this injustice. That is all. It is not a partisan concern. At stake here is the democratic which every Filipino is entitled."

Roco said he couldn't see why Aksyon's candidate, who won by 44,292 votes over Ong, would not be proclaimed.

As for the results, Roco considered: "Thirty-two years as ruling political leaders in Isabela, and they're now joined by a woman who walks on two crutches? Unbelievable."

Dy earlier charged that Padaca had been supported by the underground movement. "Let those prove that," Roco dared.

Second time

While she welcomed Roco's unwavering words, Padaca revealed that this was the second time she was dealt such an "injustice." She recalled that in 2001, she ran for representative of the third district of Isabela against Faustino Dy III and won.

But she said the House Electoral Tribunal (HET), which is composed of Supreme Court justices, ordered a recount after 150 votes in her favor and eventually declared Faustino III the winner by a slim margin of 83 votes.

"I'm very grateful to the assurance given by the leader. Go say pilgrim," Padaca said. "Maybe God thought I was ready in order for the whole nation to know that ... the Dys' tentacles have reached far and high. I hope we can heal, ly how justice in Isabela ... and that this will not be repeated in other parts of the country."

36 'kotong' cops fall; speedy prosecution pushed

A TOTAL of 36 policemen and 20 traffic enforcers have been apprehended in a crackdown on the menace of marketing barangay permits.

Duplicating "Bantay Bisaya," the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) pounced on eight traffic enforcers from the Central Police District, eight from the North Police District, four from the Eastern Police District, four from the Western Police District, and one from the Southern Police District.

The dragnet began in March after several bogus traffic policemen from the NCRPO staff, three from the Traffic Enforcement Group, and two from Camp Crame.

Traffic enforcers

Of the apprehended traffic enforcers, 11 were from the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, 11 from the Manila City traffic group, and two from the Quezon City Public Order and Safety.

NCRPO spokesperson Chief Insp. Siony Bonoan said seven under the Office of the Regional Director has been formed to conduct pre-charge investigations to determine probable cause in preparation for the filing of criminal complaints against policemen.

Police officials would also ensure the availability of its policemen during the hearings.

But Bonoanan said they would still ensure "due process" for their policemen.

Speedy hearings

Earlier, NCRPO chief Director Rodolfo de Leon entered into an agreement with the Philippine National Police Internal Affairs Service to speed up the hearings on probable administrative cases against the erring lawmen.

Under the memorandum of agreement signed the other day, the IAS would prioritize cases against "hotdog cops" and ensure speedy proceedings. The IAS serves as the secretariat of the PNP and handles all administrative cases against policemen.

Ideally, hearings of administrative cases should only last five or four 30 days, first with the private setup and the office of cases against policemen, many cases are delayed up to several years.

While cops facing administrative complaints are usually put under preventive suspension, this could only last for a maximum of 90 days. If the case is delayed, the lawmen could go back to service again.

Hearings

Under the agreement, the IAS would also immediately conduct hearings upon receipt of the complaint and formulate resolution within 20 days, a statement from the NCRPO said.

On the other hand, the NCRPO would provide IAS a "special court room" in Camp Rogelio Dery exclusively for the hearings of cases against erring cops.

According to the NCRPO, the lawmen were apprehended after numerous complaints from vendors, traders, traffic violators and even motorists, truckers and drivers of vegetables, fruits and meats.

Protection money

These claimed that several policemen and traffic enforcers were demanding protection money or in other instances, even stands up violators before demanding money.

In several areas like Quezon City some policemen have been reported to be regularly collecting money and copies of printed VIDA in exchange of not bothering the operations of illegal vendors selling pirated DVDs.

In Caloocan City, complaints have been made against policemen who allegedly collected money through property holders, companies and even drink vendors.

In an online letter of contraction, the NCRPO said these practices of some policemen had worsened the already tilting image of the police force and "[had] put the credibility of the organization in question."

The NCRPO encourages victims of extortion to report abusive cops by hotline or calling Hotel 117.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Manila catch basin of metropolis' trash

By Tarra F. Quismundo

IT COME from the boloations.

The Manila Department of Public Services (DPS) yesterday said that Manila's geographical location at the mouth of the Pasig River has turned the city into a catch basin of a garbage.

"Unfortunately, we are the catch basin. Manila is low lying, and trash from other cities accumulates here," said DPS chief Rafael Bornasino, referring to the trash that flows into the city through various creeks and waterways.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has reported that Manila accounts for seventy-five of the garbage it collects from creeks and waterways around Metro Manila.

500 tons

Some 500 tons, or some 50 truckloads of waterway trash, is collected from Manila's creeks and waterways daily. This is one-fourth of the garbage collected in the metropolis every day.

But, as Bornasino explained, not all of those come from Manila.

DPS operations division officer-in-charge Annie Paredes explained that trash from areas on higher ground, such as Quezon City and San Juan, are brought by float creeks toward the Pasig River.

"It's really like a basin, because Manila is below sea level. All the water head to Pasig River, and the end of Pasig River is Manila Bay," explained Paredes.

Manila has 24 esteros, with the shortest at 2km meters and the longest at 4,194 meters.

The esteros are found all over the city including those in the areas of Binondoc, Intramuros, San Miguel and Quiapo, and the thoroughfares Road Avenue, Pasig Line, Tandang Street, Quezon Boulevard and Ayala Boulevard.

Garbage rate

Trash collected from these are a mix of garbage thrown by residents, and those that come from neighboring cities, said Paredes.

She added that such migration is not the case that clog their floodgates, as eight locally operated pumping stations and 14 foreign-assisted ones around the city.

The Department of Public Works and Highways and the MMDA are the ones tasked to haul out the trash from creeks and waterways.

But, said Bornasino, the DPS helps out in collecting trash from the pumping stations upon request.

Pumping stations

According to a DPS report, between five to 20 truckloads of trash are collected by the department every time the MMDA and DPWH seeks their help to remove garbage from pumping stations.

But, said Paredes, garbage is not completely removed from the pumping stations, as pieces of trash would accumulate anew in the long process.

Truck kills man on bike

A MAYAMO wholesaler truck fatally rammed a 22-year-old man on a bike whom it was overtaking yesterday morning in Barangay Pinagkaisahan along Pan-American Highway in Manila.

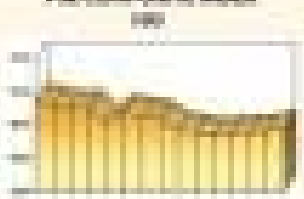
Killed on the spot was Renato Damian, a tapsilog seller and a resident of Lot 10 Sitio Cambaria, Fairview City.

No one from the two lorries damaged by the truck was hurt. Leslie Sabinorio

BUSINESS

E-mail at: business@inquirer.com.ph
Editor: Raul C. Pangalangan
Assistant Editor: Cornel S. Mandrona

First Pacific eyes bigger stake in PLDT



Shares end higher

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(For stock market report, see Page B4)

By Clarissa S. Batino

HONG KONG—First Pacific Co. Ltd. is considering to increase its stake in dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. as part of its regional expansion program.

Manuel V. Pangilinan, managing director and chief executive of First Pacific, said an increase in equity investment in PLDT was one of several alternatives being looked at by the group in growing its business in the region.

Pangilinan said options to increase First Pacific's stake in PLDT were already discussed at the board level, but stressed that no decision had been made.

"We are thinking whether we should put back in the ownership to somewhere we have made us to look elsewhere to expand," he said.

He said First Pacific could also acquire a substantial interest in a regional telecom player.

First Pacific holds a 44.5-percent stake in PLDT that it acquired in 1998 through a controversial buy-in. Another major PLDT shareholder is NTT of Japan with 15 percent.

First Pacific had been holding exploratory talks with several potential targets in the region. In April, Pangilinan went to Bangkok to look into the operations of TA Orange, Thailand's third biggest cellular phone company.

He said First Pacific could also acquire a substantial interest in a regional telecom player.

First Pacific holds a 44.5-percent stake in PLDT that it acquired in 1998 through a controversial buy-in. Another major PLDT shareholder is NTT of Japan with 15 percent.

First Pacific had been holding exploratory talks with several potential targets in the region. In April, Pangilinan went to Bangkok to look into the operations of TA Orange, Thailand's third biggest cellular phone company.

During the first quarter, he talked about plans to buy into Indonesia's Telekomunikasi Indonesia's third largest mobile operator Telekomunikasi Primobulan, which owns 60 percent of the company, reportedly seeking out the telecom firm.

"Increasing [our] interest in PLDT is something that First Pacific is considering. But we don't see that from inside as one of several options we are looking at as how with the regional expansion," said Pangilinan during the sidelines of First Pacific's annual general shareholders' meeting here yesterday.

First Pacific, a company that Pangilinan founded in the early 1980s using the capital of Indonesia's Salim family, had been looking to expand in the region's telecom sector.

Pangilinan said the group would prefer new investments in telecom. "PLDT will stand could have a role in the expansion since First Pacific had decided on a target acquisition."

The Hong Kong conglomerate owns more than 30 percent of Indofood Salim's Makmur Tbk, the region's biggest noodle manufacturer that controls 80 percent of its home market.

Of First Pacific's $41.5 million in net income last year, more than 70 percent came from PLDT and the rest from Indofood.

First Pacific doubled its net income last year from $40.1 million in 2002. The company also

(Story on B2)

Meralco drops equity conversion option in refund

By Abigail L. Ho

DISTRIBUTION utility Manila Electric Co. has scrapped the equity conversion option in giving back to its large commercial and industrial users some P10 billion in overcharges collected from February 1994 to April 2003.

Meralco rates and risk vice chief Lyanardo Manalo said in an interview yesterday that the equity conversion was too tedious for the company with implementation costs far outweighing the benefits for both the company's shareholders and the large users entitled to the refund.

"There's no advantage to it. It will require the consent of preferred and common shareholders, so it will be more tedious and expensive to implement," he said.

(Story on B2)

FIRST Pacific managing director Manuel V. Pangilinan explains the company's strong financial results and strategic direction during the conglomerate's annual stockholders' meeting Monday. With Pangilinan are members of the company's board of directors.

Gov't to jack up expenditure targets for next six years

By Michelle V. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT is expected to raise its expenditure targets for the medium term to pump-prime the economy and achieve a sustainable yearly growth of 7 percent up to 2010.

A government source said the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) believed the current expenditure targets would not enable the government to take advantage of the opportunities present in the global economy.

"We have to make the economy an attractive business site, and one way to do it is to invest more on things such as infrastructure," a source from the DBCC said.

Under the DBCC's current program, government spending was set at P915 billion for 2005, P984 billion for 2006, P1.02 trillion for 2007, P1.06 trillion for 2008 and 2009, and P1.14 trillion for 2010.

The government official said the DBCC would discuss the plan to raise the fiscal targets in its next meeting.

The national government aims to wipe out its budget deficit by 2009 or 2010. To achieve this goal, the expenditure program should be matched with the revenue targets. According to the government's medium-term schedule, revenue collection should also grow to P1.16 trillion in 2010.

The government source said that the increasing expenditure (and revenue) programs seemed to cater only to the medium-term goal of a zero deficit. The programs, he said, was not focused on helping achieve higher economic growth. To help boost the economy, the program should provide for higher expenditures that were meant to boost economic activity and generate more employment, the source added.

KING JAMES AUCTION
WILL AUCTION FROM 7 CLOSED COMPANIES
FURNITURE & FURNISHINGS
COMPUTING EQUIPMENTS

PLDT plans to declare dividends next year

By Clarissa S. Batino

HONG KONG—Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is planning to declare at least 10 percent of its net income as dividend to its common shareholders next year.

The planned dividend payout would be 30.06% first in four years after it stopped declaring dividends in mid-2001 due to losses that amounted to more than P488 million in 2000. The losses were due to huge expenses incurred by its wireless business.

Preferred shareholders, however, had continued to receive dividends.

"Our intention is to declare a 10-percent dividend and pay it as soon as possible in the first half next year," Manuel Pangilinan, chief executive officer of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Ltd. told Monday.

The managing director of First Pacific Co. Ltd. also said Monday.

The shareholders approved the appointment of Graham Leigh Mobbs as non-executive director as well as three executive directors—Chairman Manuel Pangilinan and Senior Executive Vice Presidents Napoleon L. Nazareno and Jose Ma. K. Lim.

Pangilinan said restoring dividends for common shareholders would increase the cash flow of First Pacific, the single biggest shareholder of PLDT.

First Pacific posted a net profit of $61.5 million in 2003, up 1.02 percent from $60.1 million in 2002. First Pacific owns 24.3 percent of PLDT and controls the 30 percent of Indofood Sukses Makmur Tbk, the region's biggest noodle maker.

During Monday's annual meeting of First Pacific, the company's board sought the shareholders' approval for the allocation of up to 20 percent of the total issued shares of the company.

The shareholders' approval was also sought for the repurchase of 10 percent of the company's issued shares.

The board also presented for approval the appointment of Graham Leigh Mobbs as non-executive director as well as three executive directors—Chairman Manuel Pangilinan and Senior Executive Vice Presidents Napoleon L. Nazareno and Jose Ma. K. Lim.

Creditors to retain 18% stake in NSC

By Doris C. Dumlao

CREDITORS of National Steel Corp. will retain an 18-percent stake in the company that will own and manage the former National Steel Corp. (currently in liquidation).

This forms part of their planned profit-sharing agreement with NSC buyer Global International Holdings Ltd., a unit of Indian conglomerate Ispat.

John Sycamip, senior vice president of NSC's biggest creditor Philippine National Bank, yesterday told reporters: "We'll get some equity stake in the [60%] [special purpose asset vehicle] that will own the plant."

Within the terms of the profit-sharing scheme from parts for final, Ispat would get the lion's share of the profits once Global, into the 60% of the Philippine Steel Exchange.

"Ispat has interests in the company. That's where we're gonna get the dividend. If they're successful and they let it to the ISC, the banks will get enough of the company which we can sell it in an IPO (initial public offering)," Trevena said.

As such, he said the banks would collect their share of economic wealth upon the IPO's listing or if dividends were paid.

"They may also remove their earnings in the company in which case we don't get a share, but if they conduct an IPO, we'll also have a share," Trevena said.

The plan was to list the SPV as soon as possible. Trevena said, but ISC would have to post a three-year track record of profitability to qualify for listing.

Excluding non-bank creditors, the banks' portion's total exposure in NSC stood at P1.026 billion. There are a total of 18 parties represented in the selling consortium—composed of 13 local banks, one foreign bank, one trustee to holders of NSC bonds, one investment house and two government agencies.

Meralco sales up 3% in 1st 4 mos of 2004

By Abigail L. Ma

LOPEZ LEE Manila Electric Co. is on track to earning its 5-percent sales growth target for the year, as energy sales in the first four months grew 3 percent against last year's figures.

Meralco vice president and utility ressources chief Jeanne dela Peña said in a briefing after yesterday's stockholders' meeting that its April sales were by 1.2 percent, higher than the company's projection for the period.

She said the company was also expected to hit the billionpeak of the full ressources gen billionth from 8490.1 increase in 2003 over last year's base figure since late-last year.

The company last year sold 23,634.47 million kWh of electricity. Taking into consideration its 5-percent growth target for the year, it would likely sell 25,616.19 million kWh of electricity this year.

With this sales projection, the full impact of the 0.65-centavo increase in the system loss charge on sales for the year would be around P17,270,000.

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said in a presentation during the stockholders' meeting that potential growth drivers for the year included the emergence of more shopping malls, call centers and, late, food chains as well as the establishment of additional subsidiaries like the Lightning Energy (LET) and Metro Rail Transit (MRT) systems.

Ebitda (Meralco's franchise revenue, he said there were currently 54 shopping malls, with 11 new malls were rising from this year to 2006.

Security Bank considers new way of selling NPAs

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SECURITY Bank Corp. is studying a plan to syndicate a chunk of its idle assets for disposal with those of other similar-size commercial banks to make them attractive to big investors.

Following the bank's stockholder's meeting yesterday, bank president Alberto Villarosa said the bank was of the opinion that would be considered in disposing banks' non-performing assets.

He added that Security Bank was bullish about avoiding itself of non-performing assets for special purpose vehicle (SPV) law.

"We're looking into an SPV vis-à-vis[illegible] structured vehicle. We believe in the SPV. It is just a question of balancing out the big discount the investors want versus how much pain we are willing to take," Villarosa said.

"One is to look at an SPV with P3.1 billion worth of assets for sale, we don't have that big a portfolio that investors are looking for. The other way out of the woods is to have some sort of a pool deal among banks. You can put together even as four banks that will pool their [illegible] so that when we go to investors, we will have one big portfolio. It's like a syndicated loan," Villarosa said.

Security Bank has so far sold only P500-million worth of its assets, out of a total of P3.1 billion worth of NPAs, through auction.

Also in a disclosure, Security Bank said its net profit grew 49 percent to P276 million in the first four months, with an improvement in the bank's return on equity to 6.1 percent from 6.4 percent the previous year.

Classes start June 14
BE A TOP JOURNALIST.
Enroll now at The Manila Times School of Journalism
The only school run by professional media practitioners.
The only school that offers on-the-job training from Day One.
The only school that enables you regular experience in your study.
The only school that allows you to learn from the country's journalists.
The only school where you get tuition as extra.
High school graduates are invited
Non-degree (1st year) college graduates may be considered on case-to-case basis
Scholarship grants available
ACCEPTING APPLICANTS FOR 1st SEMESTER
We accept foreign students
THOSE WHO HAVE LECTURED
The Manila Times SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
Main Campus: 6th Floor, Manila Times Building, Intramuros, Manila
Tel. Nos. 524-0030 to 47 • 371 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Pasay City, Metro Manila

Government Permit: CHRB-NCR No. C-139, Series of 1963

Poison to Go

THE SOS of Egyptian PO Boris, who control the wonderful lands despite their minority status, have begun inserting poison pill provisions in the SSGO by-laws to prevent or at least delay a takeover by unjust Money-ity-ists.

DFOBlank chair Antonio Go arose recently after dinner to hint the poison of board members to call a special meeting only for the direct of the chair and president.

In the end, a special meeting may be convened at any time on a written request of any three members of the board."

"The proposed amendments means the re-vote of the by-laws and is consistent with law that a special board meeting may be called by directors only in the absence of the duly authorized presiding officer," Go said.

According to the non-government grapevine, what pulled the 2,015,000 blue, tallo-ee combined flesh votes in the last count totaled 47.27 percent, was that the proposed amendments did not pass through the executive committee meeting for the usual stuff in your but was instead sprung in yesterday's board meeting.

As well, no votes only a simple majority, not the genuine two-thirds vote by the board, is adequately a board measure, especially one who, in the board's judgment, "represents an interest adverse to or in conflict with those of the corporation."

The Go amendments are being proposed in the wake of another legal setback, this time from the Bangko Sentral, saying that the bank management was only was the 18.9 percent block held by the Go-controlled SBC Investments "in proportion to shareholder interest of the bank."

Attorney Benjamin Bautista Jimenez Counsel from de Jesus Figa Jr., the opinion was solicited by SBSI and PFOB shareholder Filipinas Jr. Bautista said the interpretation of the Go-vote the bank's trust fund blocks to only Go-Go nominees.

Team Tagaig

THERE'S GUILT all a-flutting in management suicide threat days as the hope of managing to prove neighbor-to-Makati styles.

Mayor Freddie "FT" Tinga has appointed first-time Councilor Aurelio Bautista "AT" Bautista...chair of the city's business develop-

COCKTAILS

Hector C. Ignacio

Earn as high as 3.5%!

PSBank

US Dollar Time Deposit Rates*

	$1,000-9,999	$10,000-49,999	$50,000 & up
1 Month	2.500%	2.750%	3.000%
2 Months	2.750%	3.000%	3.250%
3 Months	3.000%	3.250%	3.500%
6 Months	3.250%	3.250%	3.500%
12 Months	3.250%	3.000%	3.000%

*Rates are per annum basis and subject to 7.5% withholding tax.

Visit any of our 121 PSBank Branches nationwide.

PSB PRIME TD

- 9% interest p.a. - GUARANTEED
- No withholding tax
- Only P50,000 minimum deposit
- 5-year Time Deposit
- Monthly crediting of interest

Available at all PSBank branches

PSBank

INOX

Meralco

IMPORTED WHEELCHAIR

FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

June 14th & 15th • Auction in Manila

HUGE 2-DAY PUBLIC AUCTION

Late Model Heavy Equipment, Trucks & Buses, Generators, Air Compressors, Spare Parts & Supplies

Over $10 Million Liquidation Value

Day 1: Equipment at San Roque Dam Project Site, San Roque, San Manuel, Pangasinan

Day 2: Equipment at Pure Point Freeport Zone, San Fernando, La Union

RABIN

www.rabin.com marisol.trio@rabin.com (0) 918.573.0796

I am CHEVROLET

Take the Dream Ride. Test Drive a Chevrolet Optra!

Get FREE Shell gas coupons and a FREE Nestlé Ice Cream Mega Stick!

April 24 - Shell, The Fort May 1 - Shell, Marcos Highway May 15 - The Podium, Ortigas

May 22 - West Gate, Alabang May 29 - SM North Edsa

Riding high on profit, PNB considers pre-paying debts

By Dave C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank, once the country's biggest bank, is headed for a second straight year of profitability and may half its self cost of a 10-year state-assisted rehabilitation program earlier than planned.

But while the bank has scaled a five-year leaving streak and is hoping to double up 2Q2B net loss to net profits this year, or over 20 percent better than the total a year ago, PNB is not out of the woods yet, according to bank officials.

"We haven't turned the corner," Lorenzo Tan, PNB president, said during a press briefing after the bank's stockholders' meeting yesterday. "What we have is just good momentum, but we're still a few more months to get the gross light from the BSP [Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas]."

The bank posted a net profit of P1.08 million last year, three years before it was expected to get back to the black under a rehabilitation program forged with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. and the BSP. Until such time that the BSP gives it a clean bill of health, the bank can not pay dividends to stockholders.

This year, its net interest income is expected to jump to 3% percent of the bank's revenues, while fee-based earnings are seen to contribute 40 percent.

Net interest margins are expected to grow by 46 percent over last year as the bank shifts to cheaper funding sources. Fee-based and other revenues are projected to expand by 30 percent, fueled by the expansion of the remittance business and sale of foreclosed properties.

Michael De Jesus, PNB head of risk groupings for corporate banking, said the bank's loan portfolio was expected to increase by P2 billion this year.

"In terms of distribution, there will be new loans to local government units, middle-market and small and medium enterprises," he said.

Once the bank is able to unwind its legacies, which date back to 1998 by able to pay-in its P6.1 billion outstanding debt to the government ahead of schedule, Tan said.

PNB is now on its second year of carrying a 10-year loan from the BSP.

PSE sorts out complaints over canceled Music trade

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) is now sorting out complaints arising from the cancellation last Friday of trades made via technology holding firm Music Construction Corp.

Carolyne Palma-ngas, PSE president, told the Inquirer that they are locked in talks with the affected stockbrokers, but that they have yet to come up with options.

Shares of Music on Monday were suspended indefinitely, pending the resolution of a trading incident last Friday.

Music conducted a spate-weight exercise to reduce its capital deficit and allow it to issue new capital. The move involved the reduction of the company's par value to 20 centavos from P1, and the reduction of common shares to 100 million from 500 million.

Preliminary in a memorandum for brokers last Friday said "the reduction of shares was not duly executed by the trading participants."

The PSE maintained that "there should have been a price adjustment, but there was inadvertence."

Jose Jesus Lanuzo May 12, Ayala-based Equitiworld Securities Inc. permitted the cancellation of transactions of Music Construction amounting.

"Just to report you, we discussed [the] matter during in the clerk. he responded indefinitely meeting on May 24, until the company presents to the Executive the meeting are properly resolved and clarified," said Rolando Penaso, Atty. II, Equitiworld corporate secretary.

Cocktails

From page B1

news commentary, in charge of "The Bet and the last show Food Terminal Inc.

Granted recently a special economic zone status, the 200-hectare PTI, also was this factory. The fort, easily down's Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay's Ayala and Rockwell centers combined.

An MBA graduate of Hitotsubashi University in Japan, he worked in the banking industry before heading to new to take charge of the family's soon-called Bataan-based Capital Bank (Taguig Rural Bank).

As co-Chairperson grapevine, Tuppi, who only new Bataanenos less than a year before the elections, plans to persuade Mayor Binay to eventually run for congressman in the next second district of Taguig.

Bartolome is the sole known son of broker Arsenio Bartolome, the Batchoke and president of the Bases Conversion Development Authority that, incidentally, promoted The Fort.

P21-M lunch bill

MIGHT! The French restaurant Gourmand in The Fort is about to 86 several 1-P21-million lunch bill for its movement Fondue Bourguignonne. Bringa had to be ordered in the bowl, the same, an outlet and other massive parts of the body after suffering multiple contacts the Brunnwald's glass door collapsed, and broke the presto, in the Instrument pulled it.

The accident happened April 23, as Bringa hosted PSE president Lorenzo Tan and 14 DIP Michael "Bikey Universe" de Asua from the bottom to attend, of all events, the body conducted Bautista PCI Bank stockholders' meeting.

Instead of presiding to the week, holder' meeting, Bringa was rushed to the Makati Med and discharged after two days scarred for life.

Still, at the rate he is asking for damages, Bringa could very well recover the losses he incurred in Bataan, the new shattered upper French restaurant he ventured into in Gerardo 4 along with the Madrigals.

Heard through the grapevine

IT is Bases de Oro that actually to general a meeting hopefully soon to be majority shake in doing approved.

(Email: cnn-tales_pal@inquirer.mail.com.)

First Pacific . . .

From page B-1

handed more meeting gains of $16.4 million.

Pangilinan said the the concerns was looking at "very positive numbers" this year as its flagship subsidiaries were seen to continue posting healthy profits.

FLIT registered P5.24 billion in net income in the first quarter of 2003, or more than double the P2.3 billion in the same period last year.

Its P112 billion net profit in 2003 was the highest ever for the 76-year-old company, now headlining out the downsight of its stainless business to keep the money flowing in. FLIT's wholly owned Smart Communications Inc. was one of the most profitable companies in the Philippines last year after earning P16.2 billion.

DISCLOSURES

ABACUS Consolidated Resources and Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 14, 4 p.m. at the Nat Room of Club Filipino, San Juan. Stockholders of record as of June 4 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

METRO Pacific Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 18, 8:30 a.m. at the Ballroom II, Second Floor of Pala-Country Club, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang. Only stockholders of record as of March 31 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Company will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 8, 4 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom of Hyatt Hotel Manila, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 9 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Philippine National Bank** were Dominga Cruz, Francisco Ejercito, Vicente Paterno, Santiago Cua Jr., Lito Salgado, Washington Sycip, Lorenzo Tan, Lucio Tan, Ricardo Tan, Florencio Tinsay and Marcelo Fernan.

* * *

SYCIP, Gorres, Velayo and Company were reappointed external auditor of Prudential Bank for corporate year 2004 to 2005.

* * *

ARES Prime Resources Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 30 at 2 p.m. at 6th Level Cebu on May 31.

* * *

BDO Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 20 with record date on June 14.

* * *

LIBMANEX Aggregates Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 29, 9 a.m. at the Board Room of Diego and Company Ltd. Pamplona, 4th of Diego Building, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of June 7 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PETRON Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 28, 9 a.m. at the Manila Pavilion of Manila Hotel. Stockholders of record as of June 30 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. **Compiled by Marissa B. Salvosa, PDI Research**

STOCKS

Mar 25, 2004 TRADES	SHARES	Open Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
Indian Rupee	India	0.021273	1.189000	19.9100
Japan Yen	Japan	0.007230	0.048000	0.4800
United Kingdom Pound	England	1.849000	1.710000	102.3000
Hong Kong Dollar	China	0.128000	0.128000	7.6800
Switzerland Franc	Switzerland	0.816000	0.787500	46.7400
Canada Dollar	Canada	0.695000	0.672000	40.0000
Singapore Dollar	Singapore	0.590000	0.580000	34.8000
Australia Dollar	Australia	0.750000	0.720000	43.2000
Taiwan Dollar	Taiwan	0.030000	0.029000	1.7400
Malaysia Ringgit	Malaysia	0.263000	0.263000	15.7800
Thailand Baht	Thailand	0.025000	0.025000	1.5000
Brazil Real	Brazil	0.350000	0.350000	21.0000
Euro	Europe	1.220000	1.220000	73.2000
Argentina Peso	Argentina	0.340000	0.340000	20.4000
Poland Zloty	Poland	0.250000	0.243750	14.6250
Russia Ruble	Russia	0.035000	0.034000	2.0400
Mexico Peso	Mexico	0.093000	0.092000	5.5200
Norway Krone	Norway	0.153000	0.151000	9.0600
Sweden Krona	Sweden	0.133000	0.131000	7.8600
New Zealand Dollar	New Zealand	0.650000	0.630000	37.8000
Bahrain Dinar	Bahrain	2.650000	2.650000	159.0000
Kuwait Dinar	Kuwait	3.400000	3.400000	204.0000
Saudi Arabia Riyal	Saudi Arabia	0.266000	0.266000	15.9600
Oman Rial	Oman	2.600000	2.600000	156.0000
Qatar Riyal	Qatar	0.274000	0.274000	16.4400
Bahrain Dirham	UAE	0.272000	0.272000	16.3200

DOF wants travel tax revenue to go straight to government

Local firm seen to ride wave of global growth

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A LOCAL office equipment maker expects to ride the Nestor hurricane in 2004 as it is poised to benefit from a projected worldwide market growth of 14 percent in terms of revenues.

Glenn Westerman, president and chief executive of printer maker and supplier Lexmark International (Philippines) Inc., said during a recent industry forum that the global revenues in the office equipment sector grew by 7 percent in 2002 and 9 percent in 2003.

The sector covers printers, fax machines, photocopies and office supplies.

"In the first quarter of this year, worldwide revenues grew by 12 percent," Westerman said. "The good times have returned."

The official said that the following factors are reshaping the market: the decline in faxing documents in favor of transmitting data through e-mail attachments, increase in photo printing with the use of digital cameras, and the emergent use of digital copiers and multi-function machines.

Aside from the growth trends in digital technology, Westerman said that the emerging trend of small and home offices is also transforming the market.

To take advantage of world growth, Lexmark has developed an all-in-one machine that serves as a color printer, scanner and fax, and color copier.

In an interview last month, Westerman said Lexmark had laid out some P1 billion to expand its inkjet printer cartridge production plant in Cebu.

He said the latest capital expenditure meant that the American company had invested some P9 billion in the country since it started its business here in 1999.

Lexmark has to expand its facilities yearly to be able to catch up with the growth of the business, Westerman said.

By Michelle V. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance wants revenue collection from travel tax to be fully remitted to the coffers of the national government, describing the move as a wise fiscal practice.

Currently portion of revenues collected from travel tax are allotted to various government agencies, namely the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA), the National Park Development Committee (NPDC), the National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Under the law, NPDC has a fixed share of P2.5 million in the annual collection of travel tax, NCCA has a 1.8-percent share, while CHED accounts for 40 percent of the total collection. PTA's share is equivalent to its 1992 receipts, with the amount of share increasing by 5 percent annually.

The excess amounts, according to the law, goes to the national government.

"Agencies with earmarked funds have little or no incentive to economize, resulting in doubtful spending," said the DOF in a position paper. "Earmarking impedes the government's ability to be flexible in managing its budget or in allocating resources.

The DOF said that instead of earmarking portions of the revenue collected from travel tax, the full amount should first be remitted to the general fund of the national government. It added that Congress must be the one deciding how the funds should be allocated to concerned government agencies.

The DOF position was made amid deliberations on a legislative proposal to change the system in distributing the revenue collected from travel tax.

The DOF said remitting first to the national government the full amount of collected travel tax before it is distributed to concerned agencies would promote transparency and effective allocation of public finances.

"Tax collections should be remitted to the Bureau of Treasury," the DOF recommended. "Then, through the budget process, regular agencies as well as government corporations must justify their need for funds."

Meralco seeks higher caps on system losses

By Abigail L. Ho

MANILA Electric Co. is pushing for the revision of the caps on system losses that power distributors can pass on to their customers.

Under Republic Act 7832 or the anti-Electricity Pilferage Act of 1994, power distributors can recover up to 9.5 percent of their system losses by passing on the costs of such losses to electricity consumers.

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said during yesterday's stockholders meeting that the company had been having difficulty meeting the 9.5-percent cap because of the condition its facilities were subjected to in various places within its franchise area.

Last year, for example, his unit lost Meralco's system loss level at 11.05 percent, about 160 percentage point higher that what was recoverable under the law.

"We're hoping that the cap will be adjusted commensurately. It's not right for all shareholders affiliates to incur the same cap. The cap should depend on the location," he said.

Francisco said Meralco planned to further bring down its system losses to 10.7 percent this year from the 10.95-percent posted last year.

"We're still over the cap, but if no shortages right, we'll be below 10 percent in two years," he said.

Shell completes phase 2 of depot downscale

PULIPARAN Shell Corp. has completed the second phase of the scaling down of its 90-year-old Pandacan installation.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. lauded this development, noting it had significantly relieved the safety hazard in the surrounding business and residential areas.

Perez said the conversion in Shell's depot demonstrating project "is a major investment in the joint government-private sector efforts to ensure the safety of the people's best countryside."

The downscaling of Shell's Pandacan installation was undertaken following a move by the city government of Manila to redenify the area from industrial to commercial. In line with a memorandum of agreement signed with the city government, Shell and the three major oil companies, Shell scaled down and removed all the tanks, buildings and structures in the portion of a "green buffer zone" assigned to the company.

Perez said Shell officers recently briefed him about the status of its Limay fuels project phase II.

"I am pleased to note that the development of the Limay park phase II project is ongoing and proceeding according to schedule, and will be completed by June 24 this year. I know for this celebration of the Araw ng Kalayaan," Perez said.

The Limay Park was designed by architect Felino and Associates. The first part of the second phase of the project was completed early this year.

Perez also cited the "very ecological impact" of the Shell project. He said the presence of a green space in the area "provides Manilans with a new breathing space."

Experience the digital age through studio-quality photo-printing performance with HP printers. All starts page with eye-catching colour and studio quality photo-printing performance. Because when it comes to digital imaging and printing technology, HP is a forerunner. In fact, HP is proud to be the technology behind many DreamWorks productions. **That's why from May 26 to June 30, 2004, with your purchase of participating HP Photosmart printer, HP PSC all-in-ones, and HP Deskjet, you'll get a free HP/Shrek 2 activity CD!** Together with the HP printers, you can do fun printable photo projects. So hurry, visit your HP resellers today!

HP PSC 1410 PHOTOSMART ALL-IN-ONE
print, fax, scan, copy
PhP19,990

HP PHOTOSMART 7660
PhP18,990

HP PSC 2210 PHOTOSMART ALL-IN-ONE
print, save, copy
PhP12,990

HP PSC 1350 PHOTOSMART ALL-IN-ONE
print, scan, copy
PhP8,990

HP PHOTOSMART 7660
PhP9,490

HP PHOTOSMART 7260
PhP5,990

HP DESKJET 3660
PhP5,990

HP DESKJET 3650
PhP4,990

SHREK 2

For more information, call (632) 867-3557 or
Toll-free 1-800-1331-4488 or email ph.contact@hp.com

Gov't rejects offers for 2-yr treasury bonds

By Madelin V. Barot

THE GOVERNMENT rejected all bids for the two-year treasury bond, in trades continued pushing interest rates upward amid subdued draws.

The Bureau of Treasury accepted the bids for the two-year debt paper, the rate could have risen by 150 basis points to 14.475 percent.

"We rejected because the offering was nice much under-subscribed, and we thought that the rates were also elevated for the moment," Deputy Treasurer Edmundo Mendiola said in a press briefing after yesterday's auction.

Tenders for the two-year Treasury drawn at only P3.63 billion, compared with the government's offering of P4 billion.

Mendiola said investors were optimistic inflation rates leveling them to seek higher interest. Mendiola considered such reasoning a temporary. He explained that the market, composed mostly of banks, had already factored in political uncertainty in the past months.

Banks were seeking higher returns around reports that followers of opposition standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr. were planning to launch massive protests after initial election results showed that candidate was trailing behind his ruthless President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I don't think the rates will go down. It will be priced in by the market because protests are expected every election year. There are so many overseas Pinoy," said Mendiola.

Mendiola said the Treasury would continue rejecting bids for T-bonds auctions as long as the market would not be working high rates.

He added that the government had no reason to buy at levels higher than secondary market rates because government securities were virtually risk-free.

"Government securities are bought on secondary for short-term basis, so we shouldn't be playing a premium," said Mendiola.

Secondary market rates were based on seven-year T-bonds, he added.

The rejection of the two-year T-bond during yesterday's auction followed last Monday's rejection of bids for the T-Bill and the seven-year bills. Last Monday's rejection was likewise due to high bids from banks.

PriceSmart opens 4th outlet in RP

PRICESMART the US-based shopping warehouse, is set to open its fourth outlet in the Philippines next month. The establishment of the new outlet in the Aseana Business Park in Parañaque Municipal Complex in Paranaque City brought the company's total storewide in the Philippines to 4 US dollars after nearly four years of operation.

The three other PriceSmart outlets are at Fort Bonifacio, Global City in Taguig, on Commonwealth Ave. in Quezon City, and at the West Service Road property of Southwoods Corporate City in Alabang, Muntinlupa.

With the opening of PriceSmart Aseana, Philippine Warehouse is to operate 29 warehouse shopping warehouses around the world.

PriceSmart was the first foreign retailer that entered in after the new Philippine retail law took effect.

PriceSmart founder Sol Price created the discount store industry in 1954 when he opened the Fedmart in the US in 1954. In 1976, Price and his son Robert developed the membership warehouse concept, and founded the Price Club, where member customers could take advantage of high-volume, low-cost operations to obtain the best possible prices on a wide array of merchandise. Price's son, Robert, became president and CEO.

It now operates in 11 countries of Central America, the Caribbean and Asia, specifically in Panama, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Aruba, Barbados, Philippines, Trinidad & Tobago, El Virgin Islands, Mexico and the Philippines.

PriceSmart also holds licenses for 11 warehouses in China, and one in Ethiopia, Micronesia.

2bU! roll

Editor Cheio Bautista-Formoso
Chief of Correspondents Ron Pantoja

Yes, the inevitable has come. 2bU! helps you celebrate the end of summer and the start of a new school year with stories on celebrities and their majors, weird courses and life in grad school. We scoured the malls for clothes, backpacks and school supplies guaranteed to bring more color to your classroom life. If you want to forget about school for a while, sit back and enjoy features on two Pinoys making waves in the international music scene. And because we believe you deserve one last shebang, we're giving away tickets to the Black Eyed Peas and Linkin Park concerts. Raise your right hand to confirm attendance

Niche majors 101

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

MORTUARY science? Broadcast meteorology? Nowadays, it is not uncommon to find college students majoring in interesting and highly unusual courses.

"Niche majors," to separate them from the more common ones, refer to a select group of students who want to distinguish themselves in a unique field. On the practical side, this paves the way for companies to provide jobs to graduates who gain unique expertise in their chosen majors.

This becomes an essential differentiating factor, especially given the thousands of students pursuing the "parent-approved" courses such as law and medicine.

Below are just some of the little-known majors that may seem a bit unusual, but you may want to consider taking:

Precision engineering with specialty in high performance engine optimization

Master's degree, University of Central Florida

Dream course if you are a fan of Discovery Channel's Junkyard Wars

The name of this course may be a mouthful, but it roughly translates to race-car building. Although it sounds like a testosterone course with a highfalutin name, graduates are snapped up by racing teams and auto companies in that ever-whittling search for the ultimate car.

Broadcast meteorology

Master's degree, Mississippi State University

Dream course if you are interested in the science behind the premises of weather disaster movies, want to be the next CNN weather anchor

Since 1987, a time when broadcast journalism became a popular course, many students majoring in meteorology and lacking broadcast skills, or vice versa, have taken this road. The Weather Channel just isn't something these students joke about, as they experience such academic highlights as storm chasing, where they literally chase after hurricanes and tornadoes.

Puppetry

Bachelor's degree, University of Connecticut and others

Dream course if you love the Muppets

Perhaps owing to the achievements of Jim Henson, and also to the obsession with non-

Ode to the backpack

TONIC FOR DRY MEN'S FASHION

These hallowed halls

For 15 years, I walked through her halls. Placed under the wings of very capable educators, I was one of the many kindergarten students to shy and reticent jumpers who received the classroom and received what was to be one of the most significant journeys of my life.

My education began with learning the English and the Filipino: alphabets, penmanship classes, and basking red and pink lanterns for the Chinese New Year. It ended with smiles and farewells. Among my friends, it ended with an outspoken promise to make our mark in the world.

It was at this time that I truly appreciated my Chinese heritage. My Chinese teachers affected me with their sense of loyalty and dedication. My peers also displayed unique Chinese-Filipino attributes that gave me a different and refreshing perspective of the Chinese, apart from the stereotypical Chinese family rituals that left me bored.

My teachers were concerned not just with how we did in tests, but also how we applied the lessons outside the classroom. Through time, I found scholarship refreshed me but treated me as a part-time Chair of them. "Ms. Diaz," taught me the value of single-mindedness, to be focused on my dreams such that the opinions of people should not matter.

The school staff was also helpful. Many had been working in the school for years. It was often comforting to see how much support the custodians, the security guards, and the personnel had with the students and the faculty. I sometimes miss that in college now, where the environment is too large and impersonal for most people to fully appreciate each other's presence.

Adolescence

During the last leg of my stay, I was very privileged to go through the struggles of adolescence along with other girls who were too busy wanting out their dreams to spend the better amount of their time with grumpy.

There was Lee, the presentness feminist and fellow debater whom I have always looked up to. There was Joni, the intelligent girl who radiates a free spirit in this day.

There was Nyan, whose sense of decency and virtue was something I rarely found in people at my age. There was Ella, whose passion and hard work made her someone I could always rely on. And there was Tammy, whose motherly guidance has always pushed me to be better at what I do every day.

There is somewhat a stigma that comes with a school run by nuns. But I wouldn't imagine my **formative years without these** women who dedicated their lives to their faith. I appreciated the fact that my introduction to God was not always by the book, but that I was allowed to discover my faith in my own way.

Many of the greatest lessons I have learned came from this place I still call a home.

Placing a bigger premium on being well-rounded instead of just being buried in books, my home taught me that being a well-rounded human in life was not the way to succeed. To make it in life, what I had to do was not just to vomit for the day as if I will vomit tomorrow to be cool, but that I should hone my other passions as I would have another chord to hang on.

Thank you to my school that awakened me far more than a decade.

Thanks, Immaculate Conception Academy. Catherine Young

Niche majors 101

From page C1

Nowadays, it is not uncommon to find college students majoring in highly unusual courses

sion and assistance to media, puppetry has made its mark in the design and theater department of many universities. Usually taken with another major such as drama, students spend many hours in workshops crafting wood, fabric and cloth and cuts into the likeness of the hostile and the strange.

Mortuary science

Associate's degree or Bachelor's degree

Dream course if you can see yourself as Fred Weiss from "Six Feet Under"

This course has been in existence for many years and yet, due to the nature of the topic, is not something normally talked about. Watching HBO's "Six Feet Under" may have given us a clue as the interests of the General to many, but for schools offering this course, dealing with the dead is no laughing matter.

Mortuary science is treated as that...a science—and they have state-of-the-art clinical embalming laboratories to prove it. Interested ones in careers offer a 12-month associate's degree or a bachelor's degree that usually lasts around four years.

Paper science and engineering

Bachelor's degree or Master's degree, University of Ohio

Dream course if you want to help better the planet

This course focuses on the end-used paper industry. Studying ecologists are ideal students; the course you learn about how paper products are made, the more you can think of ingenious ways to cut down on consumption. Only 19 universities in the US offer this course, and it is sometimes referred to as one of the country's best-kept secrets. And with a steady 100-per-cent employment rate and an average yearly salary of P3,000,000, it isn't hard to see why.

Human computer interaction

Bachelor's degree in graduate studies, Carnegie Mellon University

Dream course if you are glued to your PlayStation 2

Dubbed as the "geeky and sexy double major," this course may seem unorganic, but it is one of the courses that will allow many to capture dream jobs in the world of business or technology. It is also one of the most popular courses at Carnegie Mellon, with 40 percent of the applicants rejected every year.

With classes like Dramatic Structure of Interactive Games, it seems the perfect course for any video game or computer addict. The program's mission: "to create effective, usable, enjoyable experiences with technology through interdisciplinary research in engineering, design, computer science and the behavioral and social sciences, and to understand the impact on individuals, groups and organizations."

Hospitality management

Bachelor's degree, University of North Texas and others

Dream course if Boracay is your second home

It may sound like a diplomatically worded course from the Marcoses era, but hospitality management covers a wide range of fields. These include food service, restaurant management, travel, tourism, meeting planning, resort management, and e-business...a sturdy packaged hodgepodge of topics that is sure to attract extra pesky students.

Science fiction studies

Master's degree, University of Liverpool and others

Dream course if you love Star Wars

Pop culture may have founded science fiction geniuses as geeks, but in schools like the University of Liverpool, speculation on what nature and life is treated very seriously. Classes include critical and theoretical issues, the nature of time, time and consciousness, utopias and dystopias, and H.G. Wells.

Red or alive

"TRENDY people are important. To me they are. They initiate change. And they're critical and they force people who aren't trendy to try and become trendy which is very, very useful," These are words of wisdom from living waste legend Morrissey.

Famous fads fashion; it is the invisible frame that sparks revolution.

A couple of weeks back, buzzness hosted the official after party to the Philippine fashion Week.

Mahal Shangri-La's newest bar spot, Red, became the haunt for fashion's fickle set, who guested doors till of the bar's 21 seatbeds. Attracted fashion, they had crowded floors back and surgeon.

Designers senior and young (I can't call the former "old," but I incur their wrath) and other scene shakers and model movers (like Gil Cuerdo's and Professional Models Association of the Philippines) all gathered in the same boat.

Smoke-wafts were flashes of becomes pages of runup show taken from the daily grind of Fashion Week. Each day during fashion's busiest week, this paper published a fashion update for all the people to read through right before the actual show of the day.

Fun fashion awards

The Gil Cuerdo's girls were all decked out in cosmopolitan colors. Fashion Week head hostess Anet Espino had the girls sponsored aptly a denim designer.

Sarah Meier came in a tacky Britney Spears ("Hit Me Baby One More Time" era). Later that night, I snapped a picture of her snuggled between her pan and present boyfriend Bengy Manotoc and Bengy Alfonso.

Sarah, Tessa Prieto-Valdes and myself hosted the night's fun, fun awards. The Big Fun Award (you know what they say about big fun) went to Marjee Kintanar for the female division and to Mike Jaygeblogger for the male division—they both took home gift certificates from Gold's Gym, around home to models.

The Smallest Waist Awards went to Rissa Samson, Nicolette Bell and Ida Campo.

Andie Eigbuu announced that the Best Collection award would go to Mel Angel de Dios. "Hope next time he produces more clothes than his 12-piece collection," Andie said.

The Most Senior Designer Award went to Gerry Katigbak. The designer is known for his youth and join-in-ness.

It was an evening full of creative concoctions, many escapes and candid laughter, courtesy of Trina's cold support with the designers (but of course!). The giveaways? Super! model tool bags—the latest fashion "must have."

Afterwards, Joey Ed stated to salute the success of Filipino fashion and of actually get great designs as we collectively came out glamor to our beloved little industry—all the models, designers, this paper and everybody else who makes fashion, fashion and more fashion.

This week's Super!

Tomorrow, Singapore houses fashion moves and shakers by throwing a two-flowing fashion cocktail party at Hoss. Lulu Tan Gan, Bernice Kristine Diaz, Lala Flores, Daisy Ocampo Diaz and Gerry Katigbak will be the honorees.

Speaking of fashion parties, June is expected to be busy. Events to fall on the calendar will be the Manila Fashion Festival (June 16 at The Tent), the Preview Style Society Ball, the Bleue Young Designers Competition (June 29 at the SM Trend and the Fancywoods Designer's Gala (June 30 also at The Tent).

The Saturday still are the Manila savant of the Black Eyed Peas. This should be exciting. Apl. Dr. Ap., a band member, is actually Filipino (we should all know that by now). Apl. works for Allen Pineda Lindo—how much more Pinoy can you get? Also in town of the front runners of the famed hip hop/funk band.

On Sunday, it's time to race for the finishes "Double Power E and Line" race, which starts on GMA 7's "SOP" show and ends at the "I Was" afternoon entertainment gossip show. It's a race with a new which celebrities and consumers into a weekend "double power" challenge (a pair for every team) through running, mountain biking, kayaking, swimming and other competitive activities that one would definitely need vitamins for.

But first all of a sudden are Phoenix the Barcandia of Paulo Alcazaren running around your neighborhood, don't fret. The race is on.

And chances are, it's gonna be wet, wet, wet—because of the rain. Rain is...

The talented Rocky Rock

Meet the man responsible for bringing the Black Eyed Peas to Manila

By Maui V. Rapes

THERE'S no doubt that Filipinos are learning at the seams with talent. And while everyone's excited to see Apl. De. Ap. do his thing on Saturday's Black Eyed Peas concert, we're a little bit more interested in the man who's responsible for actually bringing the fab foursome to Philippine shores—DJ Rocky Rock.

"I'm living low actually," Rocky insists, also DJ Rocky Rock. Inspite. "I got to show up more. Right now I'm really focused on [the homecoming]."

"The bummer" would be "Island Fiesta Entertainment," which is behind the Manila concert of Black Eyed Peas. Rocky-thanks Culture Club and now as the station Blazing 105.9 for helping him out in bringing the band over.

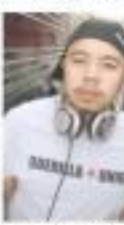
Rocky, 26, left for San Jose, California, when he was only 3 years old. By the time he was 13, his cousins had already become doctors and nurses, pushing us to take their school health and medical equipment. But luckily for us, he didn't follow in their footsteps.

"I just wanted to DJ," he recalls. "When I was in high school, that's where I started to lock myself in my room because I seriously wanted to start winning competitions."

By 1996, he had become one of the top five DJs in the US. He was a professional battle DJ. "I just kept on practicing," he says. "My skills got older and I just turned the turntable into an instrument. Like, I'd play with the equalizer and create these many hip-hop beats."

He was also the first DJ to win a title in a competition. "It was a 2002 Pool Nova," he beams. In 2003, he won a competition that would win him a friendship with one of today's biggest rock acts.

"Taylor Jack had this US tour, and in each city they had one DJ to battle [with], and I battled his J. The explains. "I opened for Korn and Linkin Park to Mexico, in front of 100,000 people." So then moved to LA to work on Linkin Park's "Reanimation" and their video, became frontmen with Jay-Dubb, and became the band's main DJ for the live-action Tour in 2003. And in case you have video games, you've probably seen him in NBA Ballers, as the only DJ on the roster. "I have my own character in a video game!" he laughs.



Keeping it real

So where does the Black Eyed Peas fit in all of this? "I met them through producer Jimmy Jam, and I did the remix of 'Where's the Love' for them," he says. Chances are, though, that you haven't heard that remix, since it never was released. "The single was already released and it was doing so well that I guess they didn't need a remix anymore."

He has, however, worked with Phil Lim on a project for MTV—a tribute to Edu. He will also be the Black Eyed Peas' opening act on Saturday's concert.

"I wanna blow myself up here!" he laughs. "I'm really pumped of Apl.—he's a Filipino and he represents all of us. Filipino artists making it big overseas."

"I want to show people that you shouldn't give up... I want to give back to the Filipino people. I want them to see that. I'm a Filipino guy and that I'm making it" he says.

"Making it" would be an understatement. Rocky's going to Taiwan in July, and will be touring again with Linkin Park, before diving more business and concerts here.

"I want to do lots of things," he laughs. "But right now I'm concentrating on the Black Eyed Peas concert."

DJ Rocky Rock spins tomorrow night at Hoss, Friday and Saturday at Embassy Club, Libis.

E-mail the author at mkrapes@gmail.com

WIN BLACK EYED PEAS GOODIES

"Where is the Love?" Why? Edu is dead. It's with us, but we can be really brainy and annoying, too. But we do have 15 pairs of tickets (or give-away, we're complaining? All you have to do is tell us how many albums the Black Eyed Peas have released and what their titles are. Send in your answers to: contest.line@inquirer.com.ph on or before noon time on 02 06. Be sure to leave your contact numbers! We've also got five copies of "Elephunk" to give away (many thanks to the fab folk people at Universal Music Group).

LIFESTYLE

20 minutes with Chad I

By Mae V. Reyes
Staff Correspondent

THEY'VE worked with the likes of Beyonce, Britney Spears, No Doubt. They've even earned a Grammy for their work on Janet Jackson's album. And now, with the help of rapper friend Ma'e, they've churned out a second album for one of their many projects, N.E.R.D.

We may know 30-year-old Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo as the powerbutton-mind team The Neptunes—the duo that can turn any dull track into a butt-dancing, booty-shaking party song. They're also part of N.E.R.D., a trio whose first album, "In Search Of...," was a sleeper hit in 2002.

What sets N.E.R.D.'s sonds apart from The Neptunes?

According to Hugo, with N.E.R.D., "there is no sound. What we do in N.E.R.D. is a fast world with no limits. It's a place where people can go in and explore, it's a whole new world, a new universe, and it's open to anyone who wants to be part of it. Pretty deep, huh?"

Things have definitely changed on their second album, "Fly or Die," a delicate mix of pop, funk, hip hop and pop. Unlike the first record, where they got the band approach to play for them, these guys picked up their own instruments and played on the album themselves.

Williams also tapped into his inner teen. The album is laced with teen-filled lyrics, like lollies and the many awkward stages of adolescence.

Zsazsa got to chat with Chad Hugo on the phone. "Sorry my voice is this way," he says. "I'm still in bed."

No, no...the pleasure's ours.

When did you get into music?

Since I was a kid. I used to lock myself in my room and listen to soundtracks, like "My Fair Lady," "The Wizard of Oz" and a lot of Broadway stuff. And then I'd imagine what the film would be like in my head. We didn't have a TV so that's what I did. And then my brother and sister would come home from school, and they listened to a lot of hip hop, so I got into that, you know, boombox-ing. It was a world I could get into.

But you're also a good sax player.

I wanted to do something different. I was once competitive as a sax player, but with making beats, it's like doing my own thing. I felt like a conductor: I have all these things at my fingertips, and you can dance to it. You can't dance to a sax.

So tell us about the bands you were in during high school and college.

Well, I was in a bunch of bands. There was "The Legacy." We did dance music, but it wasn't anything [corny] (laughs). It was much cooler and hardcore, with hard-er beats, more hip hop. Then The Neptunes.

Is it true you stole a computer when you were in high school?

(Groans) Why does everyone want to know about that? It was just something sneaky that I did. It was a payback for guys, and after I played my sax, I went into the library and got a computer to hookup to my keyboard, because I saw it on the Cosby show that you could do that. But then my dad saw it and brought it back, so now it's terrible. I had to write essays in class, stand in the bad kids' lunch line... you

20 MINUTES C6

20 minutes with Chad Hugo

From page B3

known when kids look at you while you're in line to get your food and they're like, 'Ooh, there are the frontbreakers, those III kids.' For weeks, I never did it again.

What was the first project you ever did?

This singer hired me to do his song, and he paid me $150. Silly thought, I guess he was a drug dealer, I mean, he gave me $800 in $1 bills! He pulled this big wad of money out of his pocket and just handed it to me.

Why did it [produce from this album]?

We wanted to do it ourselves this time, be more honest with our music. We didn't care, we didn't want to produce it, we just wanted to have fun. Take it back to the roots. Just us guys playing on our toys.

Pharrell writes the songs. Why don't you?

I don't write songs. I'm a bad lyricist. They come out crazy. You know what, come to think of it, I never really tried. Maybe I should give it a try. I'm into playing music more, so, it translates more universal.

And you've just picked up the guitar, right?

I'm still learning, but hopefully one day I'll be really good. I can play the bass, the drums and I do background vocals. I can say pregame, beat D-minor, and backwards, I do three-fifth school.

We heard you don't like touring.

I like performing. I don't have time to tour all the time. I'm a domestic dude, and touring takes a lot of time and toll. I perform when I can. I just can't tour.

Any crazy tour stories?

None that I'd like to mention. Um, someone threw a panty onstage and I stepped on it.

Of all the artists you've worked with, who was the best?

I'd have to say Justin Timberlake. He was a cool dude. He knows what to do, he understands where we're coming from. And he helped us a lot in releasing. I took out to Soundgarden [Seattle] is also another favorite person, we're finishing some other songs right now [for her]. This one song's kinda hot, and we're doing some channeler things, pop dance.

With your project with Usher, you players work under a different name. How many aliases do you have?

We're changing our name a little. People expect a lot from The Neptunes. We just want them to listen to the music. We're working under "The Exploration of Sound." But you know, it could just be "Pharrell and Chad," or "Chad and Pharrell" or "Huge Pills."

Often, so what we're recording with Usher, Beyoncé on the track "Maybe" like?

He was in another country. Technology makes things possible. But that's not playing most of it.

Kind of like Blink 182 and Robert Smith's.

Oh, really, who? They're not in the same country? (starts singing Blink 182's "I Miss You")

Pharrell has his own clothing line. Ever thought of doing another project besides music?

No, but I help him out. I mean, [Billionaire Boys' Club] is just a shell with a logo.

"I don't write songs. I'm a bad lyricist. I'm into playing music more, [since] it's more universal."

Graphic) I'm not presenting and talking about it. In the future, I might want to direct videos. Maybe do a movie even. Or, she's trying to search for that new thing. I'm thinking of going back to school, like accountancy.

Neptunes are always tipped up when other Neptunes or even half-Neptunes make it big abroad. What do you think of that?

I think it's great for people. I think it has a lot to do with because we're sort of alien cool. I'm not saying that we have no direction, but because we're so diverse. Legends from experience, because here in the States, people don't know how we live, how we grew up. We need to educate that. I think it's natural, no one else knows about us, at least over here. It's like, "Flo what?", or "I eat sushi, he eats Chinese food, well, what do you guys eat?". We just need to define ourselves.

Lastly, who's in your CD player right now?

The Jesus Adapt "Circus, circus, new sounds are baby." Honestly, it sounds like pa. gas out there, this guy is crazy. The music gets slow then fast. It's odd stuff. But I guess that's what the '70s was all about—peace, love, free love, the war. Music reflects what's going on in society, so I guess that's what it was like at that time.

N.E.R.D.'s "Fly or Die" is available under Warner Records.

E-mail the author at volcanojet106@hotmail.com

Win N.E.R.D CDs

WE'VE got N.E.R.D CDs to give away thanks to the very cool people at MIH Philippines! Just send in your answer to the question that Chad Hugo has worked with and send in your answer to contest2k@inquirer.com.ph on or before Monday, May 31.

Friends . . .

From page C3

lose a friend or both. But you may also strengthen it. But at least, you would bring change. Thus, you wouldn't have to worry about not having this or that friend's feelings —which is important, don't get me wrong, but totally misplaced in your situation since I am sure he is already hurting.

As for your other friend possibly giving up a potential romance with you for the sake of the other guy. Once all the crap has been cut and it becomes clear whether he likes you back or not, this concern would come being one and it would be all the better for you.

Once the dust has settled after the shock that bravery always brings, all of you will find out just what kind of stuff your friendship is really made of. That, perhaps, is the most important question of all. Good luck.

SEPTEMBER

E-mail the writer at tuchsenbert@yahoo.com. Chat users is inviting letter senders to indicate if they want their e-mail address printed so separate blocks and lists our there can get in touch with them and send in their comments and advice.

Helicopter ride for winners

TRAVELCOM brought the second leg of the Triple Play Challenge to Dalhousie Singkiwa.

Staged in collaboration with Globe, Red Escape, FunGhanges, Enchanted King, Asia, Extreme Snowball Philippines and Top Gun Mobile Golf and Climbing Inc., the competition had over 39 winners in different games. Grand and winners got a free ride in the Triple Play helicopter.

The Triple Play Challenge started with the bowling leg. Those who completed the game moved on to the next game, the Pool Cleaning Challenge. The Dare Ball Challenge.

Winners received gifts from Globe and Red Philippines.

LIFESTYLE

Friends caught in a love triangle

DEAR Mark and Sag:

I'm 23. Can you daughters ever relate to two girls now? I am very close with my two gay friends, one of whom is closeted, but only the other. I am choosing. The other hung out together. The other knows that I do like him, while the other one knows about it and still shows his love to me.

What I am afraid of right now is that the one I like might just give up on our friend and not pursue any romance. What if he "gives me up" to the other friend? And what will I do as we are to burn my other friend?

AM

To not lose the one you don't like, make sure you are not caught being lovey-dovey for some being friendly with your crush. Being spotted together while doing such the most unnoticeable activity in the whole planet can still do disservice to be alone in her thoughts.

I know that will prove to be a challenge considering you're crushing on someone you want not to caught being with. Just think deeply how good it is if you want to keep Mr. Platonic as a friend. As for that ratio you're devoting affix, give him simple signal and SEE works.

Both have known which guy you prefer, so it's up to your craft to make a move on you or not. His decision will show which relationship has more importance to him.

If your crush continues to avoid the platonic path with you, it clearly means that he treasures his friendship with the other guy more and thinks it's not best to have a relationship with you—not now, at least.

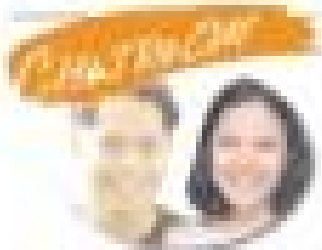
If he asks for your hand and your arms, don't go on a chopping spree, because you have some serious explaining (or avoiding) to do. But be comforted by the fact that at least, you'll be in the golden hands of fate.

MARK

"Your questions are of considerable importance, but I don't think they are the right ones that you should be asking.

As many of your contemporaries go round sounds, there is actually a very discernible hierarchy of power in it. One guy declares you, yet you don't reciprocate his feelings. That makes him the "less powerful" one between you two.

You, in turn, declare another guy who is also reciprocal with his affections, or at least, that's how I understand it. (You said you have not told us



Yifei Mark Sidkiu
& September Ardoiro

you love you on him. Ergo, he has the most pull in your little love-scored constellation.

And until he does something about it—either he tells you that he likes you, or he asks you to stop chasing after him—the days of you could be locked in this painful stalemate indefinitely, given how stubborn all of you are in pursuing after you want. And your friendship would certainly suffer, little encouragement for fair competition.

"Would you want me to happen" is the most pertinent question to your situation, and I am sure your answer would be "No."

But this slow death of your friendship doesn't have to happen. You can shift the balance of power and make something happen. You can tell your friend who loves you that he'll never be more than just a friend to you and that it would be better for everyone involved if he simply accepted that.

Then, you can give an ultimatum to your crush and ask him if he plans to make you more special forever and if you really have a chance with him. (If this, you could...

You will surely reach the friendship stage to...

(C)

Win Linkin Park concert tickets!

LOVE Linkin Park? Well, so do we. And we're giving away tickets to their concert on June 15, as well as VLP room which you can't buy anywhere, and Jag Jeans gift checks to boot!

We'll pick our four winners every week, and all you have to do is get those creative juices flowing by making something scrapbook-worthy for Linkin Park. We're talking letters, sketches, Art Attacks—anything that we can actually give to Linkin Park, because, well, we're actually going to give them to Linkin Park!

Send/drop off those artworks of love to 2F45, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor. Mascardo and Tagaytay Streets, Makati City. Who knows—you might find yourself rocking as close to the stage you would actually see Dr. Dre scale Chesney's fingerpoodle. And in case you don't win the jet, we've still got Monsoon Tour Package CDs and a Nu Godfrey imaginary up for grabs.

Back to [graduate] school

By Danicar Mariano
24/7 Correspondent

SEVERAL weeks after I graduated from college, I began yearning for the familiar comforts of our university library. I developed withdrawal symptoms and desired to attend class—any class—again so I could pretend to listen to the teacher.

What I really wanted to do was be in a classroom. I wanted to be an eternal student—and that's when I decided I better become a teacher—which means taking up graduate studies. It was the only way I could continue to be on campus without being considered a bum.

I took the test for graduate studies and found the Math doubly hard (but in the ACET, even though the course I was applying for was Literary and Cultural Studies).

Still, I managed to pass and even got a graduate assistant scholarship. I was on my way.

Nope, it's not true that you need to gain work experience first before taking master's studies—not for my course, anyway. It's a chicken and egg situation, actually. On one hand, work helps you gain perspective away from what you are studying, thereby allowing you to handle it more effectively. But a job can also distract you and make you a "mercy" student.

I have classmates who are only coming back to school after several years of working and they are now trained to talking down nurses and terrified of writing papers and answering tests because of the precaution to do better since they are older.

I also have one classmate who has been teaching in high school for 20 years and who finds it difficult to be in a graduate school setting. In grad school, the tendency is to make the discussions more in-depth and complicated, in complete contrast to what she has been trying to do for two decades, which was to simplify and make points easily digestible for younger students.

But of course, it has been a course of such growth in her part, learning new theories on how to read "literature" and "culture" as well as being around people who are older and wiser, so to speak.

Aside from the regular approach to literature, we learn the cultural and interdisciplinary approaches to a text, and even to jokes and mall structures, flyovers and other phenomena of modern society.

The contemporary cultural theories we take up make reviewing a text more relevant and holistic. It's designed for teachers and scholars who want to grow in their appreciation and criticism of literature. That's why there's a 50-percent discount given to full-time teachers who take the course.

The scholarship I got, however, covers the tuition 100 percent and even provides an allowance for part-time work. Given the vast pool of underemployed, overeducated individuals in this country, I know that being in the academe is a very privileged existence.

In the academe, you can write creatively and critically and earn your keep. It may not make you rich, but in today's society, having the opportunity to continue learning and sharing that learning to fellow enthusiastic and curious minds is blessing enough.